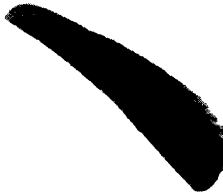
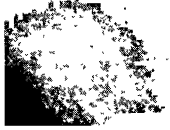


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OLD DIPLOMACY



LORD HARDINGE OF PENSHURST, K.G.

OLD DIPLOMACY

THE REMINISCENCES OF

LORD HARDINGE OF PENSHURST

K.G., P.C., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O., LL.D.

LONDON

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FOREWORD

NO biographer could aspire to emulate even remotely the precision and wealth of personal detail with which the late Lord Hardinge of Penshurst has recorded events of his own long life of public service to the State, now published from his Memoirs under the title he himself selected of "Old Diplomacy".

The title is appropriate to an epoch already passing into the realms of history, in which the positions of authority he occupied enabled him to play, with advantage to his country, so prominent a part.

Lord Hardinge's own words reveal the qualities which lent distinction to his career—courage, undaunted determination, a sound judgment and an abiding optimism that in most instances were justified by after-events.

Fortune had smiled on him from birth, less from material advantages than from those of being endowed with good health, a high character and an indefatigable, painstaking industry in the performance of duty.

Outspoken as he was in his dealings with all and sundry, as is reflected in his writings, their tempering at the hands of others would have detracted from the self-portrait these Diaries reveal.

Happily blessed in his married life by a wife of ideal balance to his own temperament, and whose charm of personality lent enchantment to Charles Hardinge's every advancement in his official career, his later years were sorely darkened by heavy domestic sorrows.

Yet to life's end there shone throughout the guiding light of high endeavour for King and Country, while amidst all wanderings in foreign lands, his heart remained ever faithful to family traditions and to his beloved native soil of Kent.

For reasons of convenience to readers of this narrative, and also to conform with publishing facilities, it has been decided to separate the

Diplomatic and Indian sections of Lord Hardinge's Diaries and to publish them in two volumes.

The latter, when published, will therefore form a sequel to the earlier one, although chronologically it will dovetail into the main sequence of the Diaries.

CROMER.

July 1947.

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- Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, K.G. *Frontispiece*
Photo: Pedro Lieven.
- Lady Hardinge of Penshurst, C.I. *Facing page 52*
Photo: G. Glanville.

These volumes of my memoirs have been written as a record of my official life. Whether they will ever be published is a question requiring careful consideration, but although I would never object to any correction approved by my executors in a sentence or phrase, or even to the omission of any name for any really good reason, I strongly object to these memoirs being *officially* censored before publication.

HARDINGE OF P.

CHAPTER I

EARLY YEARS

LORD MORLEY in his work on Rousseau wrote : " It is hard to know how a man is to tell the story of his own life without egotism ", and that is what I must try to do, for it is not my life but the events which surrounded it that are of interest. And yet these are only of ephemeral interest since, as wrote Marcus Aurelius, " All things soon pass away and become a mere tale, and complete oblivion soon buries them." It is not a spirit of egotism that has prompted me to jot down some of my recollections, but the insistent pressure of my daughter, who has so often urged me to put on paper some reminiscences of my life and particularly of my forty-three and a half years' service at home and abroad, which have not been without incidents of personal and even of general political interest. During that period, in addition to service in many subordinate posts of the Diplomatic Service, I was Ambassador at St. Petersburg and Paris, Viceroy of India, and Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office for an aggregate period of about ten years. This will explain how, during my official life, I have seen and heard much of interest, have known many distinguished personages and have been involved in international political events of the highest diplomatic interest and importance. In all this I take no credit to myself beyond the fact that, spurred by ambition, I know that I worked harder than most young men of my day in the Diplomatic Service, for which I was more than amply rewarded. Still, I recognize that much of my later success was due to my good fortune in marrying a wife who by her charm, cleverness, popularity and tact was of the greatest assistance to me in my career and who performed her part of her official duties far better than I ever performed mine.

I was the second son in a family of five sons and three daughters and was born at Dufferin Lodge, Highgate, on the 20th June 1858. It was a strange coincidence that I first saw the light in a house leased by my father from Lord Dufferin, under whom I had the good fortune to serve in later

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years when he was Ambassador in Constantinople and again in Paris. My father was then Under-Secretary of State at the War Office and had leased Dufferin Lodge so as to be near the War Office and the House of Lords. The house with its extensive gardens and lovely view of Harrow and its church spire have long since disappeared and given place to suburban villadom.

My father was the eldest son of Field-Marshal the first Viscount Hardinge, G.C.B., Commander-in-Chief in England, Governor-General of India and Secretary of State for War, his mother being a daughter of Lord Londonderry and widow of Sir Walter James. He had the misfortune, when quite a young man, to lose one of his legs by amputation below the knee owing to its being crushed on board ship, but in spite of this infliction he was singularly active all his life, and hunted regularly almost to the time of his death. My mother was Lady Lavinia Bingham, a tall and beautiful woman with classical features, the daughter of Field-Marshal the Earl of Lucan, G.C.B., Colonel of the 1st Life Guards, who commanded the Cavalry Divisions in the Crimea, and was one of the protagonists in the heated controversy of the day as to the responsibility for the magnificent but costly charge of the Light Brigade under the command of his own brother-in-law the Earl of Cardigan. This controversy created bitterness and hostility between the two brothers-in-law which never faded, not even after the death of Lord Cardigan. My brothers and sisters and I were thus descended from two Field-M Marshals who were our grandfathers.

My grandfather on my father's side died two or three years before I was born, but Lord Lucan lived till 1889 in the full vigour of his 89 years and at Queen Victoria's Jubilee in 1887, when 87 years old, he rode past at Aldershot at the great review at the head of his regiment, the 1st Life Guards, and with his tall upright figure and wearing his helmet and cuirass, looked like a young man. He was a man of violent temper and very strong likes and dislikes, but a clever man. During the Fenian days he could wander alone over his large property in Mayo and nobody dared to interfere with him. It was said of him that on one occasion, finding a foreign diplomatist an unwelcome visitor in his house, he threw him out of the window and injured his victim very severely. I was really fond of him and he was, I think, fond of me too, and used to scold me if I did not go to see him very often in his little house in South Street.

It was, when as a little boy and staying in his house, an amusement to

me to peep from the bow-window of his bedroom into the next house where I could see the famous Florence Nightingale in bed, she being, I imagine, bed-ridden at the time. Of course I was too young then to realize how celebrated she was.

My mother died in September 1864 when I was 6 years old, shortly after the birth of my youngest brother George. Medical skill and nursing were not what they are to-day ; had they been, she would not probably have died. I can remember her quite well with her tall graceful figure. The last time I saw her was a few days before she died and I can see her now lying in bed with her beautiful hair covering the pillow and the evening sun pouring in through the windows as she gave me in her hand a small bunch of grapes. I little realized then that I would never see her again. My father was absolutely distracted with grief at her death. He had a hard task to bring up eight strong, healthy and uproarious children, of whom five were sons, and I often think what a poor time he had. On the other hand, we had no cause for complaint, though we were brought up in the most Spartan fashion with plenty of the necessities of life but no luxuries of any kind. It would be difficult in these days of rapid movement and change to realize the monotony of our existence, for we never left South Park except to go for a few days at Christmas to my Uncle Lord Northbourne's place, Betteshanger, near Sandwich, and once a year, as an annual and exceptional treat, we were all taken to the Crystal Palace for the day. We were not spoilt and we looked forward for months to this day with the utmost enthusiasm. I remember well that when my father and mother went to London for the season it took two days for the horses and carriages to get there.

Some people talk and write of the happiness of childhood. On looking back it seems to have been one of dull monotony, of exaggerated childish worries and bothers and of a complete absence of any softening influences. Hardly any visitors ever came to South Park except a few artist friends of my father such as Sir Francis Grant and Sir Edwin Landseer, who came every year to a shooting-party. Still, my feelings towards my father have always been those of profound respect and gratitude for his kindness and for the manner in which he brought us up, austere though the system may have been. More particularly so for the excellent education that he, though a poor man, gave his children. The five sons were all sent to the very best schools, no expense being spared. I am glad to remember that from the day I went to school at the age of nine, till my father's death when I was

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thirty-six, I always wrote to him once a week, whether at home or abroad, and I do not think he ever failed to write to me in reply.

I have omitted to mention that my father was a very good artist both in oils and water-colours. For more than twenty years he exhibited annually in the Royal Academy. He taught us all to draw, some with success and some without. I found water-colour painting in later life a great resource especially when at distant and isolated posts of the Diplomatic Service.

In 1868, within a few months of my tenth birthday, I went to school, and the next twelve years of my life were entirely absorbed by education at Cheam, Harrow and Cambridge.

Cheam, my private school, was run by the Reverend R. S. Tabor and consisted of about 100 boys. It was a fashionable school in those days and an expensive one. Many of my friends of Harrow, Cambridge and after were at school with me there. The teaching was quite first-rate and the standard of games was high. The school was almost always represented by one or more Cheam boys in the Eton and Harrow cricket elevens that met at Lord's. Life at Cheam was Spartan in the extreme and we were certainly underfed but seemed to thrive on it. We were up at 6 a.m. in the summer and 6.30 a.m. in the winter, and I shall never forget the cold of the classrooms at 7 a.m. of a winter's morning. Our one good meal of the day was luncheon, and parents who used to come to see their sons and partook of luncheon went away impressed with the excellence and generosity of the meal. They would have thought otherwise had they seen our breakfast and tea, when we had nothing but chunks of bread smothered with salt butter and tea ready mixed from hot-water cans.

The head master and Mrs. Tabor, who was of colossal size, were very unpopular with the boys, but we all loved the matron, who enjoyed the very appropriate name of Mrs. Alright. I could not like Mr. Tabor as he was one of the greatest snobs I ever met. I wonder why many private schoolmasters are snobs? I am sure they thereby lose the respect of the boys, who are always thoroughly democratic and pay no respect to birth or wealth, the only claims to special recognition by them being those due to excellence at work or play or to nice character. There was a good deal of bullying at Cheam, but during the two years that I was head of the school I did my best to prevent new boys suffering from the same experience that I had had.

When I went to Cheam it had been decided by my father with my

own consent that I should go into the Navy and all my studies were directed with this end in view. When 12 years old I went up to London for my examination and nobody can imagine the depth of my disappointment when, at the medical examination which preceded the other, I was rejected by the Medical Board for a slight hernia. I know that my physique was not good at that age, as I was weedy, thin and overgrown, but very healthy. The doctors warned me that I must not ride, play cricket or football or take any strenuous exercise, but that was too much for me and I did not pay the slightest attention to their warnings, and in due course was Captain of the cricket and football elevens and won all the prizes for fives. I may add that in less than two years I was perfectly sound, and probably few people have taken more strenuous exercise of all kinds than I have during the course of my varied life. This contretemps led to my future being reconsidered and it was decided that I should go to Harrow, and the course of my studies was modified accordingly as Greek was not included in subjects for the Navy. Although disappointed at the time, I always regard this episode as an instance of the direct intervention of Providence by which I was destined to the career which I eventually pursued, though my father had other ideas and then wished me to go to the Bar. As things turned out I spent nearly five years at Cheam and was 14½ years old when I went to Harrow. When I think of those days at Cheam I am struck by the fact of what a nice lot of boys my schoolfellows were and what a high sense of honour and loyalty existed amongst them. Although private schools are now very different from what Cheam was then, I am sure they could not turn out nicer boys than those who came from Cheam, and so long as private and public schools turn out clean-minded boys with a high sense of honour and duty, nobody need despair of the future of our country, for they will in the end undoubtedly lead in every walk of life and leaven the whole mass of the people.

It was in January 1873 that I went to Harrow and was placed in the Upper Shell, the second highest form that a new boy could take. I obtained my remove every term and in exactly two years from my arrival I reached the sixth form, in which I remained for five terms until I left in July 1876.

I was in a small house of the Reverend E. M. Young—boys in small houses being more comfortable and better fed and cared for than in the big houses—but it was a handicap from the point of view of games since the combined small houses formed a separate unity in the playing fields and, owing to the number of their boys, were not allowed to compete with the

big houses for the honour of being "cock" house at cricket and football. This was really a great drawback from a boy's point of view. My house-master was a very well-dressed and good-looking man. It was said that he trimmed his beard after the picture of our Lord by Leonardo da Vinci. He was a good scholar and took the sixth form in classics, but was a man of very narrow views, though kind. It was an unusual act of kindness when he gave me a holiday and lent me his horse to ride over to Eton to see the match against Winchester. My enjoyment and swagger may be imagined as I rode down High Street of Harrow just when I knew that the street would be full of boys going to or returning from their classrooms and houses.

Dr. Butler, the Head Master, was always very kind to me and we kept in touch and correspondence with each other for a great many years until his death. He was a splendid man and greatly respected by the boys for his past athletics as well as his scholastic achievements. I was never in his form as I went on to the Modern side, but I always liked and respected him. We kept in touch during later life and he often wrote to me when I was in India. He was such a good man and friend.

The teachers and the teaching at Harrow were, in my opinion, indifferent. The masters had not the knack of interesting the boys in their work. The solitary exception was E. Bowen, a very interesting and able man with wide views and the author of some of the best Harrow songs. He never punished boys by giving them lines to write, really an idiotic form of punishment, but I was sent instead two or three times to count the number of lamp-posts two miles away during my playhours, having to be back by a certain time. I sat under him for two years and learnt from him a great deal of modern history and French and German, which he taught remarkably well for an Englishman.

During my time at Harrow I became Head of the Small Houses and Captain of the cricket and football elevens for two years. I was second in one School fives competition and first in the following year, and in 1876 was in the School cricket eleven, receiving my colours as second choice. In the match at Lord's, the Eton boys went in first on a scorching hot day and a perfect wicket and made a prodigious score. Harrow went in late in the afternoon. I went in first for Harrow and saw six wickets fall before I was bowled out for a score of 26. It was a complete collapse. The Harrow Captain, H. Meek, was a wonderful hitter and two successive balls that he received from the Eton slow bowler he hit clean over the pavilion,

scoring six for each. The pavilion was not then as high as now, but it required a very big hit to clear it. Unfortunately, he tried to do the same with the third ball of the over and was stumped. Harrow had to follow on and we were beaten in one innings. I only made eight runs in the second innings. I forget what the total scores were. It was for us a disappointing match. We were an overrated team, L. K. Jarvis being the only really first-class player, while the Eton eleven had some brilliant players in Forbes, Bligh, Portal, Whitfield and Bury.

In those days the Harrow eleven was always driven up to Lord's from Harrow on a coach by that splendid old sportsman Lord Sefton, and I remember well that not the least enjoyable part of being in the Harrow eleven was sitting behind his magnificent team of chestnuts, which he handled with marvellous skill.

All the cricket I learnt at Harrow was due to the coaching of those two splendid Harrovians, Fred Ponsonby and Bob Grimston, and to the bowling of the professional Jimmy Hartfield. I loved old Bob, who always umpired for the Fifth Form game in a wonderfully shaped black tall hat on the hottest of days and cursed us freely when we missed a catch or made a bad stroke. He never went to Lord's to see the Eton and Harrow match, but I met him once riding a cob outside Lord's picking up items of news from boys coming out from the ground. He told me his nerves could not stand seeing the play.

Harrow was a wonderful experience and a very happy one. I made many lasting friendships there, and one of the greatest honours ever paid to me was the dinner given to me by the old Harrovians before I went to India in 1910, and one of my happiest memories is the Harrow dinners that I gave each year at Simla to old Harrovians from all over India. They were very cheery functions and "Forty Years On" was never sung with more enthusiasm than under the Indian stars at those dinners.

While I was at Harrow my godmother, Lady Lucan, died and left me a small legacy of £400. This incident had great influence on my life. Although my father wanted me to go to the Bar, my one ambition, after my failure on medical grounds to enter the Navy, was to join the Diplomatic Service. In those days an Attaché in the Diplomatic Service had to serve on probation for two years without pay and it was always expected that the parents or guardians of an Attaché should guarantee to him a minimum allowance of £400 a year. My father always declined to give such a guarantee and it was obvious that I could not live for two years in the

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Service at an Embassy abroad with an allowance of only £200 or £300 a year. Consequently the legacy of £400 was most providential, as it sufficed to help me to tide over the first two years without pay, and I calculated that as soon as I received a salary I would be able to pay my way, a forecast which proved correct.

My first term at Cambridge began in October 1876. I was a member of Trinity College, but being a Freshman had to live out of college. After a year I had allocated to me very nice rooms on the ground floor of the Old Court of Trinity, where I spent two very happy years. I thoroughly enjoyed being in college, which, in my opinion, has inestimable advantages.

Although I had many old Harrow friends at Trinity, I had the good fortune to get into the best set of old Etonians, who counted amongst them the two Lytteltons,¹ Ivo Bligh² and many others, and Edward Lyttelton became one of my best friends and gave me good advice and help during the first year of my residence at Cambridge. Fourteen years later he officiated at my wedding.

I belonged to the Pitt Club and the A.D.C., but the smallness of my allowance "cramped my style" and prevented me doing many things, such as playing real tennis, which I would otherwise have enjoyed. I had only £200 a year, and out of this I had to pay all my expenses, including my Private Tutor's and College fees. It was insufficient and a mistaken policy on the part of my father as it was so harassing.

Before I went to Cambridge I promised my father at his request not to play cricket for the University. I therefore took no trouble to practise or play on the University ground, but I was Captain for two years of the Trinity College Cricket Club, the strongest club in Cambridge, and I captained for two years the next sixteen against the University eleven. Further, I was elected "Quidnunc", an honour granted to only the thirteen best cricketers in the University who naturally comprised the eleven. In spite of my promise, I was able to play a lot of cricket for my College and the various clubs to which I belonged and I gained a reputation for the number of centuries that I scored—I thoroughly enjoyed my cricket, perhaps even more than if I had been in the University eleven, and I can honestly say that I worked very hard all the time for a degree in Mathematical Honours and simultaneously for the entrance examination into the Diplomatic Service. At football I always played full back for the Trinity Harrovian team, and the very last time that I ever played football was in the final for the Inter-

¹ Edward and Alfred Lyttelton.

² Afterwards Earl of Darnley.

Collegiate Football Cup when the Trinity Harrovians, after one of the fiercest but best-tempered matches on record, beat the Trinity Etonians by one goal in the last five minutes. It was a fine ending to my football career !

Those who read this might possibly infer that my time at Cambridge was chiefly devoted to games and amusement, but this was not so, as nobody could have worked harder than I did, and I even paid out of my small allowance the cost of a private " coach " for my mathematical examination. What made it all the harder for me was that at Harrow, thanks to the bad teaching, I had grown to dislike mathematics as a subject, and would have infinitely preferred to compete in the History Tripos. Every summer I spent six weeks of the Long Vacation at Cambridge working at mathematics and as soon as they were over I went to France for a month to learn French for my examination for the Diplomatic Service. It was at Cambridge in the Long Vacation that I first made the acquaintance of George Curzon and St. John Brodrick, who came as guests to Trinity in order to read and who both became, in different ways, associated with my later life. Curzon was gay, debonair and amusing, while Brodrick was always the best and cheeriest of companions.

The fact of my having to prepare for two examinations within three months of each other could hardly fail to react one upon the other, and to my disappointment I came out top of the Third Class in the Mathematical Tripos instead of securing a place in the second as I had hoped, but, on the other hand, I passed easily three months later my examination for the Diplomatic Service which, after all, was by far the more important to me of the two.

The ten terms or $3\frac{1}{2}$ years that I spent at Cambridge were some of the happiest years of my life. They were my first experience of freedom and of being " on one's own ". The world was smiling, one had no cares and no cloud on the horizon was visible. Looking back, one can so much better appreciate how deep was the impression created by association with learned dons and clever undergraduates, and by the interesting conversations to which one was often privileged to listen without necessarily taking part in them. At the same time there was the lighter side of undergraduate life with all its amusements and jokes, which were certainly of a most innocent nature, and undergraduate life, at Trinity College, was as gay and healthy as it was serious. The friendships made were life friendships, but alas ! how many of them now have gone.

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I took my degree on the 31st January 1880 and received my nomination for the Diplomatic Service on the 12th February with a notification that an examination would be held three months later. I proceeded abroad immediately in order to rub up my French, and spent two months in the family of a French pasteur at Valence where there were no temptations of any kind and where there was really nothing to do except work. The last month before my examination I spent at Scoones' establishment in Garrick Street.

CHAPTER II

THE FOREIGN OFFICE AND CONSTANTINOPLE, 1880-1884

I JOINED the Foreign Office on the 31st May 1880 and was put in what was then called the German Department. It was an extraordinary department. The head of it was Sir Percy Anderson, a very genial official with only one eye. The second in the Department rejoiced in the name of "Beauty" Stephens, who prided himself on his good looks, his success in Society and partly also on his incapacity to do any serious work. He was very amusing but a very bad bargain for the Government. The other members of the Department were Eric Barrington, P. le Poer Trench, a diplomatist, the Master of Napier, Gerald Portal, Arthur Leveson-Gower and myself. Trench and Leveson-Gower did practically all the work of the Department. It was regarded as the Social Department of the Foreign Office and if we did very little work we were certainly a very happy band. Lord Granville was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs at the time and Sir T. Sanderson (afterwards Lord Sanderson) his private secretary. Sanderson proved one of my greatest friends during a long spell of years and he would have been very much surprised if he had at that time been told that I was eventually to be his immediate successor as Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office.

The Foreign Office was a very different place from what it is now. The work was infinitesimal by comparison. There were no second-division clerks, no cypherers, no typewriters and no telephones. All the work was done by upper-division clerks, and though it may be said that it was absurd to employ highly educated young men to cypher and decypher telegrams, to copy out despatches in their own handwriting and even to seal up and address Foreign Office bags, there is no doubt that these subordinate duties made the clerks very efficient as clerks, though no scope or opportunity was given them for political education and initiative.

During my stay in the Foreign Office I passed what the Civil Service

Commissioners described as "a very satisfactory examination in Public Law", by which I was to receive an additional £100 a year as salary as soon as I became a Third Secretary in the Diplomatic Service.

After eight happy months spent in the Foreign Office I was sent at my own request as unpaid Attaché to the Embassy at Constantinople, where Mr. G. J. Goschen (later Lord Goschen) was Ambassador on a special mission to settle the Greek and Montenegrin questions in accordance with the Treaty of Berlin. He was my chief for only a few months. He was kind, and was hospitable, but the deadliness of life at the Embassy at that time is inconceivable and it had the evil effect of driving the staff of young men, a numerous and cheery lot, to spend their evenings in the *cafés chantants* and gambling-hells with which Pera abounded. These were not reputable haunts and were liable to police raids, but I am bound to say that they were frequented solely as an amusing way of passing the time and I never heard of any lapse from the path of virtue nor any but small gambling losses. On the other hand, we worked very hard most of the day, beginning at 9 a.m., and some of us always returned to work at 11 p.m. to cypher or decypher telegrams that had arrived during the course of the evening, and to complete any other work. We never did less than nine or ten hours' work during the day and we were all very keen and interested in it.

One of my most pleasant recollections is of the expeditions with the Ambassador into the Sea of Marmora on board the Embassy stationnaire H.M.S. *Antelope*, which I thoroughly enjoyed in every way. Our other forms of recreation were riding, cricket and tennis. The German Ambassador, Count Hatzfeldt, was a great resource to me as he was very keen on tennis and I played with him three or four times a week either at our Embassy or at his. Although there were Ambassadorial Conferences nearly every day, he never allowed them to interfere with his tennis, and he often arrived at the Conference holding his tennis racquet behind his back and, as President, adjourned the Conference as soon as the hour for tennis had arrived. I met there for the first time Willie Tyrrell, then about 12 years old, with his mother who was sister to the wife of Count Radolinski (afterwards Prince Radolin), Councillor at the German Embassy, later Hof Marschall to the Empress Frederick and finally German Ambassador in Paris. Some years later when at the Embassy in Berlin I renewed my games of tennis with Count Hatzfeldt, who was then German Minister for Foreign Affairs and who had had a very good tennis court laid out in the garden of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, where he transacted a good deal of

official business while playing tennis with our Ambassador, Sir E. Malet, who also enjoyed a game.

Mr. Goschen, having completed his mission, left Constantinople for home during the month of May and made way for Lord Dufferin, who had been appointed Permanent Ambassador in his place. He arrived in Constantinople in June 1881.

Then followed three and a half of the most interesting, most profitable and most happy years of my career. As a chief, Lord Dufferin was a model to all others, for he was in everything kindness itself and always showed the greatest thought and consideration for the most humble official serving under him. Combined with exceptional charm and a pleasing exterior, he possessed very remarkable intellectual and literary gifts, while his talent for diplomacy was second to none. He always discussed the diplomatic situation with the greatest freedom and lucidity with any member of his staff and even with many outside friends. He startled me sometimes by his indiscretions to the latter, but, to my knowledge, he was only let down once and that was a very bad case. By studying his methods of diplomacy and by listening to his views on political questions, I learnt during those three and a half years, more of the science of diplomacy than at any other time, for the mind is particularly receptive of knowledge and friendly counsel between the ages of twenty-two and twenty-six. When acting as his Private Secretary he sent me one day with a message to M. Nelidoff, the Russian Ambassador, just at a moment of crisis in Egyptian affairs. I asked Lord Dufferin what I was to say if M. Nelidoff questioned me on the crisis. He replied: "Tell him the truth. He will not believe you." Lord Dufferin was quite right, as M. Nelidoff showed me clearly that he thought I was lying. He impressed on me on one occasion the importance of taking note of the smallest details in the words and actions of statesmen and diplomatists, and showed me how conclusions can often be arrived at from the most trifling incident which would probably escape the notice of an unobservant person. Later on, when I was serving as his Private Secretary, I was often able to give him news derived simply from careful observation, which in the end proved correct. He always gave his staff the utmost encouragement and it was a pleasure indeed to serve under him. He entertained the Corps Diplomatique and Constantinople Society with the most lavish hospitality, in which he was very ably seconded by Lady Dufferin, who played her part as British Ambassadors with the same skill as the Ambassador played his. Lord and Lady Dufferin loved receiving

their friends, and the British Embassy was the centre of Society and movement in the Turkish capital. The Ambassador demanded at the same time, and very rightly, the active co-operation of his staff to secure the social reputation of his Embassy, and I remember well, a few weeks after his arrival in Therapia, being sent for and asked why I had not been at a ball at the Italian Embassy on the previous evening. I replied that I had been there but that, feeling bored, I had left very early and gone to bed. I was sternly rebuked and told that he expected all his young men to attend every ball and make themselves popular in Society by dancing till the end of the evening. I am bound to say that His Excellency always gave an admirable example by dancing with all the prettiest and youngest ladies until the small hours. His staff, following his injunctions and example, soon became very popular in Society and Lord Dufferin was quite right and we soon realized it.

Lord Dufferin had a very difficult and anxious time in 1882 over Egyptian affairs before the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir, which was the beginning of the British occupation of Egypt. The revolt of Arabi Pasha was the signal for an outbreak in Lower Egypt and the massacre of a number of Europeans by the so-called Nationalist forces. The French, the Italians and the Turks were all invited by H.M. Government to co-operate with them to restore order in Egypt, but with a strange lack of foresight they each refused in turn. Lord Dufferin, acting on urgent instructions from home, made a most determined effort to secure Turkish co-operation, and on one occasion was actually in personal negotiation with the Sultan Abdul Hamid from 3 p.m. till 2 a.m. the next morning and almost succeeded in inducing him to sign a military convention. It was fortunate, however, that he failed, for on his return to the Embassy at Therapia he found a telegram instructing him not to sign the Anglo-Turkish Military Convention for military co-operation in Egypt, if he had not already done so. This telegram had arrived four hours before the return of the Ambassador while he was trying to conclude the Convention, and the Secretary in charge received a serious reprimand for not having despatched the telegram by a mounted messenger to the Palace. The bombardment of Alexandria followed almost immediately afterwards and the despatch of a British expeditionary force to Egypt. Until there was the clash of arms in Egypt the work of the Embassy was terrific and the whole staff of the Embassy was at work every night till 3 a.m. dealing with the telegrams that poured in. Lord Dufferin always sent us an excellent supper at midnight. The only offer of co-operation

on the part of the Turks was a proposal to get rid of Arabi Pasha by the usual Turkish device of a cup of coffee. This offer was made quite seriously to the Embassy.

After the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir, when Arabi Pasha's forces were completely defeated by the British forces under Lord Wolseley, the Government of the day sent Lord Dufferin on a special mission to Cairo to make a report upon the situation and upon the best system for the future administration of Egypt. Being a very junior Secretary I was, to my great disappointment, left behind at Constantinople with other members of the staff to carry on the work of the Embassy, but two months later I had the good fortune to be called to Egypt by Lord Dufferin, and arriving there at the beginning of January I had three of the pleasantest and cheeriest months of my life at Cairo. There were no less than 10,000 British troops in and around Cairo during that winter and my colleagues of the Chancery and I, having very little to do, had the greatest fun with all the subalterns of the various regiments and spent a great many evenings at their regimental messes. We had an athletic staff and used to compete with the various regiments, after dining with them, in athletic sports such as tug-of-war, jumping chairs and various other competitions. I got severely scolded by Lord Dufferin on one occasion for having encouraged and "led astray" Sir E. Malet, British Diplomatic Agent in Cairo and twenty years my senior, in joining a chair-jumping competition in which he fell and splintered his jaw rather badly !

There was a good opera and a wonderful ballet in Cairo at that time and the best performances were always given on Sunday evenings. Lord Dufferin would never go to the Opera on Sundays and in order, as we believed, and not without reason, to prevent his staff from going expected us all to dine with him on Sunday evenings. We generally said good night to Lord and Lady Dufferin shortly after ten o'clock, and he never realized that on Sunday nights the Opera began only at ten o'clock and that his box was always well filled by the members of his staff and their friends ! Many years afterwards when serving with Lord Dufferin in Paris I told him of our misbehaviour and he thoroughly enjoyed the joke.

One of my daily tasks was to ride with Lord Dufferin at noon and I used to find it very hot, though Lord Dufferin never turned a hair. I had a very rough mount on a horse from the Mounted Infantry lines, but I soon changed this for a beautiful white Egyptian donkey which cantered as fast as Lord Dufferin's Arab horse. These rides were a source of great

pleasure to me as I had the advantage of hearing Lord Dufferin talk, and one of his charms was that he always took as much trouble to talk to the youngest and most humble Attaché as he would take in discussing the highest policy with a Prime Minister. The six months that he spent in Egypt were employed in drawing up a report upon the future administration of Egypt. It was sent to London before Lord Dufferin left Egypt in the spring, but as far as I can remember it bore little fruit, only a few of his recommendations being accepted. It was however a masterpiece of literary composition.

When Lord Dufferin left Cairo for London I returned to my duties at Constantinople, but very shortly afterwards I was struck down with an attack of typhoid fever, and as one of our Secretaries, Maitland Sartoris, a most gifted and charming person, had died in the Embassy only three months earlier from the same fell disease, it was decided to send me away by the first boat leaving Constantinople for any destination. The first boat to leave was a Russian ship to Odessa, and at two hours' notice I was taken out of bed and put on board ship with an English servant to look after me. I shall never forget that journey. It was very rough, my servant was very seasick and never came near me ! I had a very bad cough, which brought on a violent hæmorrhage and my berth was saturated with blood. I am sometimes surprised that I survived, for on arrival at Odessa, feeling wretchedly ill, I wandered about through the Custom House and on the quays searching for an hotel in a biting wind and with deep snow on the ground, and I naturally felt the cold all the more owing to my having just come from Egypt. For six weeks I remained in bed, very ill indeed, but was well looked after by a nice Russian doctor trained in a London hospital and by my English servant, who, when not seasick, showed me the utmost devotion. Some weeks later I went home on sick leave and very soon recovered my health. In the autumn I returned to Constantinople and remained there till after Lord Dufferin's departure to England in the autumn of 1884 on his appointment as Viceroy of India. As I was at that time his Private Secretary I stayed behind to wind up his affairs at Constantinople. I deeply regretted his departure as I was absolutely devoted to him and to all his family, who had made the Embassy a home in its best sense for me and my colleagues on the staff.

All through his life Lord Dufferin had been reckless in his private financial affairs and these cast a gloom over the last years of his life. As an instance of his recklessness I may mention that he complained to me, as his Private

Secretary, of the heavy quarterly bills. I made a great effort to economise and at the close of the following quarter I was able to tell him with some pride that I had succeeded in reducing the accounts by £500. He expressed his warm gratitude, but to my surprise I received a few days later a bill for a diamond bracelet costing £500. I asked what it meant and was told it was for Lady Dufferin. When I protested, all Lord Dufferin said was : "Did you not say you had saved for me £500?" There was no reply to this.

Constantinople was a very primitive but pleasant place in those days. Nothing could spoil the natural beauty of the Bosphorus, or of the wonderful Byzantine buildings scattered over Stamboul and Galata, though surrounded by squalid houses and hovels. The streets were filthy, full of mangy pariah dogs, and so badly paved that it was pain and grief to bump in a carriage over the large potholes in them. As a matter of fact, most people, in consequence of the state of the streets, went about in sedan chairs borne by burly Armenians who exhibited great skill in covering the ground very fast without jolting the occupants. These Armenian bearers, or hamals, were wonderfully strong men, and a man thought nothing of carrying a piano on his back. Most of them were killed like sheep and without resistance in the Armenian massacres.

On the other hand, locomotion on the Bosphorus was on the most luxurious and picturesque scale. Most people had their own caiques, long graceful boats, rowed by one, two or three caïquejis, according to their position and rank. These rowers were dressed in many-coloured liveries embroidered with gold, and all the cushions and trappings of these caiques were decorated in the same way. It was a most comfortable and, at the same time, swift way of getting about from places on the Bosphorus. On state occasions the Ambassadors went in caiques with twelve rowers, and it was really a very beautiful sight. The Ambassadors had also their launches manned by seamen of their respective navies, and these added to the gaiety of the traffic on the Bosphorus. It would be impossible to describe in adequate terms the wonderful beauty of the moonlight nights on the Bosphorus, the outlines of the hills on the Asiatic shore, the cries of the fishermen signalling the passage of the fish, the song of the nightingales and the sparkling movements of the dancing fireflies. To me all these remain very vivid memories and very pleasant ones too.

Abdul Hamid was Sultan of Turkey. He had not been very long on the throne, having succeeded his elder brother Sultan Mahmoud, who was

deposed after a reign of only a few months because he was said to have become imbecile or insane. Sultan Mahmoud survived many years his deposition and I often saw him in the palace or gardens of Tcheraghahn where he was kept as prisoner, when passing up or down the Bosphorus in the Ambassador's launch. He had succeeded Sultan Abdul Aziz, who had the reputation of being a splendid and typical Sultan with a fine presence and a regal way of doing things, but he met his end by assassination, and Dr. Dickson, the Embassy doctor, often described to me how on the day following the murder he had seen the body of the late Sultan Abdul Aziz lying nearly naked and uncared for in a corner of the guard room at Yildiz Kiosk, the Imperial Palace. His veins had been cut open to give the appearance of suicide, but I think there is little doubt that he was murdered.

Abdul Hamid was a strange but very clever man. He gradually built up for himself a pre-eminent position in the Moslem world as Caliph and claimed the privilege of exercising supremacy over all Mahomedans. He certainly became a world-wide force. The entry of his successor into the War against the Allies brought about the downfall of the Sultanate, and now that the Turkish Caliphate has been abolished and the Turkish Royal Family expelled from Turkey, there is little doubt that Turkey will lose greatly in prestige in the Mahomedan world and that the Caliphate will either disappear or return once more to the much-hated Arabs who held it for three hundred years until the Turkish conquest of Egypt. Abdul Hamid was a very timid man and had a furtive look which was attributed to his fear of assassination. He was always changing the regiments on guard at the Palace for fear of plots against his life, and infinite precautions were taken daily that poison was not introduced into his food. He was a silent man, with much dignity of manner though not of presence. I was present with the Ambassador at several audiences with the Sultan and at three or four State dinners given by His Majesty. His policy was very reactionary, and as years went by he became cruel, and was chiefly responsible for the terrible massacres of Armenians which took place not only in Constantinople but also in the provinces. In any case he could have prevented them had he wished to do so. He was a skilful diplomatist and played off very successfully the English against the Russians, between whom in those days the greatest political rivalry existed. I think the Sultan was afraid of both Powers, and even in those early days he began to lean on the advice of Radowitz, who had succeeded Hatzfeldt as German Ambassador in Con-

stantinople. The British occupation of Egypt naturally accentuated the Sultan's hostility towards our country.

One of the first incidents that I remember well at Constantinople was the trial of Midhat Pasha, the great Turkish reformer and ex-Grand Vizier. It took place in a large tent set up on a hill commanding a fine view of the Bosphorus, and close to a large military barrack. One of the charges made against him was complicity in the murder of the Sultan Abdul Aziz, he having been Grand Vizier at the time, but everybody knew and was convinced of the utter absurdity of regarding Midhat Pasha as in any way involved in the crime. I watched the trial for some hours, and though at that time I did not know Turkish well, it was not difficult to realize what a farce the proceedings were and how little chance he had of obtaining justice before such a tribunal. Midhat Pasha was condemned to exile at Taif, a dreadful place in Arabia, not far distant from Mecca, where after a few years he died, deeply regretted by all enlightened Turks who had the interest of their country at heart.

The way business was carried on at the Sublime Porte has always amused me. All the papers and notes received from each Embassy were kept in great confusion in their respective separate bags. If an Ambassador wanted to know the contents of a note addressed to the Turkish Government by some other Ambassador, all he had to do was to send his Chief Dragoman down to the Sublime Porte where, by the aid of a small *douceur* he got hold of the bag containing the document, and after careful perusal, or often after taking a copy, returned the note in its bag to the official in charge. It was all so simple and friendly and certainly could not be regarded as an instance of "secret diplomacy", a phrase which has been so absurdly condemned by people who do not understand what diplomacy means. It is impossible to imagine greater corruption than existed in those days. All the officials at the Sublime Porte received bribes, and the Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs received from our Embassy a salary of £1,500 a year, which it was necessary to pay as the other Embassies paid like sums. It is only fair to the Turkish officials to say that they received practically no salaries from their own Government, which was in a bankrupt state. A great deal of secret-service money was spent in those days at Constantinople, and much as one may dislike the idea, it was inevitable if an Embassy were to achieve any political success.

One of my most interesting experiences in Turkey was a journey which I made in the autumn of 1881 from Ineboli on the Black Sea to Angora

and from there to Eskishehir and Broussa. My object was not only to see a little of the interior of Asia Minor, but at the same time to learn to speak Turkish, which I had been studying for some months with a "Khoja". I went with only a Turkish servant who knew no language but his own, and two ponies which we rode, and I bought another pony in the interior to carry my scanty baggage. It was a most interesting but hard journey owing to the absence of food and fodder after a visitation of locusts which had devoured every vestige of green over a wide area. I shot pigeons and partridges for the pot on the road and never had I aimed more carefully, as our dinner often depended upon what I was able to shoot. Several times we had to sleep on the ground, which was not pleasant as it was generally very cold at night on the highlands after the hot days. When I visited Angora I little thought that it would ever become the capital of Turkey. It was then a miserable little Turkish town situated on the side of a hill commanded by a fort in ruins, the only objects of real interest being some Roman monuments on which the inscriptions were still legible and intact. There were some big lakes close by where I had some very good duck shooting. In those days there were no railways, no roads and no intercourse with Constantinople except by camels or packhorses. All the high lands were singularly beautiful with masses of rhododendrons growing wild in great profusion and to a great height, while the valleys contained good pasture lands well watered by mountain streams and rivers. The country was infested with Circassian brigands who were the terror of the countryside, and it was considered necessary by the Turkish authorities to secure my protection by enlisting their services as my escort. Naturally I had to pay them well and some of them were pleasant but very unscrupulous rascals. After six weeks' travelling I had achieved my object, and on my return to Constantinople was able to pass immediately my examination for the special allowance granted to Diplomats for a good knowledge of the Turkish language.

On my return I drew up a report of my journey which Lord Dufferin was good enough to send officially to the Foreign Office, and I thought it particularly nice of Lord Granville, the Secretary of State, to have taken the trouble to write to my father, "Your son Charles has written a most interesting report of a journey from Ineboli to Broussa, via Angora." At the same time I received the official thanks of Lord Granville for my report, with a statement that he had observed with satisfaction the good use I had made of my leisure time.

During my travels in Anatolia I learnt the unwisdom of ever praising anything possessed by a Turk. I spent one night in the house of a Turkish official and admired greatly two Anatolian greyhounds that were in the room. He at once said to me "Sizin", meaning "They are yours". My Turkish servant, who was present waiting on me, was much disturbed by this, and told me we would have to take the dogs with us, which would be a great nuisance, otherwise the official would be deeply offended. I told him that nothing would induce me to hamper my movements with two dogs that I did not want, and we agreed that the only course to follow was to start in the early morn without them, before the official was up. This we did successfully and congratulated ourselves on our escape. Three months later a Turk turned up at the Embassy leading the two dogs which had to accept and which placed me also under the obligation of sending the official a handsome present and of rewarding the man who had brought the dogs. I did not have the dogs very long before they raided the kitchen of Sir Hugh Wyndham, First Secretary of the Embassy, and carried off a leg of mutton which was being cooked for his luncheon, and he insisted on my getting rid of them. I had no difficulty in placing them with a Turk, as they were really beautiful dogs.

Amongst other amusements at Constantinople was that of yachting, in which both the Ambassador and I delighted, and which provided us with great sport and many occasions for delightful expeditions in the Sea of Marmora, an ideal sea for yachting. Lord Dufferin had a yawl specially built for himself of about three tons which he could handle entirely alone, an ingenious arrangement being made by which all the sheets were brought aft to what was almost like the keyboard of a piano so that he could set or shorten sail while sitting in the well and at the helm. He was a most skilful yachtsman, and sailing and tennis were his principal sources of recreation. I was very fond of sailing and was joint owner with Edward Goschen of a ten-ton cutter named the *Tilburina*, and we had great fun together in many most enjoyable expeditions lasting two or three days in the Sea of Marmora, where Prince's Islands afforded admirable harbours of refuge for small yachts. Edward Goschen, generally known as "Teddy", became eventually Ambassador in Berlin and took part in the historic conversation with Bethmann-Hollweg on the outbreak of war between France and Germany and the invasion of Belgium, when the latter described as a "scrap of paper" the international Treaty guaranteeing the integrity and neutrality of Belgium to which both Great Britain and Prussia were parties.

Those four years at Constantinople were years of extraordinary happiness and of great advantage to me. The work of the Embassy was always heavy, though, of course, heavier at some times than others, but these were to me the most impressionable years of my life, and by my good fortune in having a most able and charming chief and a very delightful set of colleagues in the Embassy, the opportunities presented for gaining experience and knowledge were countless, and whatever success I may have had later was, I am sure, largely due to the wonderful training through which I had the good fortune to pass during those four years at Constantinople. Three of the actual staff became, eventually, Ambassadors ; Nicolson, Goschen and myself.

During those early days at Constantinople I came across some very interesting people, amongst them being Laurence Oliphant, Wilfred Blunt, Colonel Stewart, Nazli Hanoum, Admiral Hobart Pasha and several others. Laurence Oliphant had joined a peculiar sect whose theory was to practise an advanced system of common property and of submission to the will of their leader, a certain Mr. Harris. It was said that at one time Oliphant, a most brilliant member of society in London, had in obedience to Mr. Harris's orders sold oranges in Piccadilly close to the St. James's Club, of which he was a member. When I knew him he and his very charming wife were members of a Colony of the same sect at Haifa in Syria and were on their way thither. I heard afterwards that they did not remain there indefinitely, and that Oliphant had so far shown a certain worldly wisdom in holding back a fraction of his fortune from the grabbing claws of Mr. Harris.

Wilfred Blunt was of quite another kind. A literary man of wealth and position and a great traveller, he degenerated into a hopeless political crank. He espoused the cause of all revolutionaries and made himself conspicuous in 1881 by his support of Arabi Pasha, the Egyptian, whose rebellion was the cause of the first Egyptian war. I knew him in Egypt when I was at Cairo with Lord Dufferin and I was staying with him at his place, Crabbet Park, when the news of the death of Gordon Pasha at Khartoum reached England. He displayed such heartlessness and unmistakable signs of gladness that I left by the first train next morning without saying good-bye.

Colonel Stewart was a splendid man and a good sportsman whom I knew well as a Military Vice-Consul in Anatolia. He was Gordon Pasha's second in command and died with Gordon at Khartoum.

LEAVING CONSTANTINOPLE

Nazli Hanoum was an Egyptian princess, a very beautiful woman who was engaged to Maitland Sartoris, one of the Secretaries of the Embassy at Constantinople, a charming and able man. He had a very promising career before him which would have been entirely ruined if this marriage had materialized, but he died of typhoid in the Embassy just before I went to Egypt and it was my painful duty to tell the Princess all the details of his illness. It was a most harrowing interview. She was very beautiful.

Admiral Hobart Pasha was an ex-officer of the British Navy who commanded the Turkish fleet in the Russo-Turkish War with some success. He enjoyed in consequence an exceptional position in Constantinople, but made the mistake of marrying a young wife in his old age who proved to be exceptionally foolish.

There were also many very distinguished Ambassadors whom I knew well, such as Hatzfeldt, Montebello, Radowitz, Nelidoff, Calice and others, all of whom were notable personages in the political world.

With Lord Dufferin's departure to India the question of my future arose as, very naturally, I needed a change and had no desire to start afresh in a new regime at Constantinople and under a new Ambassador. I therefore asked the Foreign Office to transfer me to Berlin, and Lord Dufferin used his influence with both Lord Granville and Sir E. Malet to secure my transfer. This took place before the end of the year 1884.

CHAPTER III

BERLIN AND WASHINGTON, 1885-1887

I TOOK up my post as Third Secretary in the Embassy at Berlin at the beginning of the year 1885, and although, owing to my promotion to the rank of Second Secretary and my consequent transfer to Washington, I was only a year in Berlin, it was a most interesting year and of great future advantage, as I came into contact with, and made the acquaintance of, all the most distinguished persons in Berlin. The old Emperor William I was still alive, the Emperor Frederick was Crown Prince, while the Emperor William II was merely Prince William and at that time of small account in the political world of Berlin. All of these I got to know fairly well, especially the Crown Prince and Princess, owing to the Crown Princess, formerly Princess Royal of England, having known my family. I knew also Prince Bismarck, his son Herbert Bismarck, and Moltke, all of whom were very nice to me whenever I met them. I had one interesting lunch with Prince Bismarck where I remember well drinking champagne and porter mixed, and very nasty it was.

Sir Edward Malet was a very pleasant Chief to serve under. Nobody could have been more kind or hospitable to his staff. He had just married Lady Ermytrude Russell, daughter of the Duke of Bedford. Although she was of mature age, she was one of the most shy people that I have ever met and at dinner hardly spoke at all. I am sure Sir Edward used to want us to dine quietly with them very often so as to draw her out, and we attempted to do so by addressing our conversation to her, but it was hard work, and whether it was that we succeeded too well, I am told that in her old age she never stopped talking. It should, however, be stated that when she did speak she showed an intimate knowledge of internal home politics. In those days Sir Edward was *persona gratissima* at the German Court and in society, but when he retired from Berlin several years later he was treated with great discourtesy by the young Kaiser

William, merely because he had behaved like a gentleman and had done his duty to his country in connection with the tragedy surrounding the illness and death of the Emperor Frederick. Without being a brilliant man, Sir Edward was a man of tact, of sound common sense and judgment, and imbued with all the best traditions of diplomacy and of our Diplomatic Service. In those days the Colonial ambitions of Germany were just beginning to be awakened, and I remember that our very first Colonial conflict was in connection with a horrible country named "Angra Pequena" in South Africa, which Germany claimed by occupation, and which we eventually recognized as German territory. This was the first stage in the development of German South-West Africa and in their Colonial policy which in the end brought Germany into conflict with England, France, Belgium and Portugal, and which was indirectly the cause and origin of their policy of naval and military expansion, which again in its turn contributed to the outbreak of the Great War in Europe, and resulted in the loss by Germany of all her Colonial possessions. German Colonial policy proved a real boomerang.

In those days the military show and splendour in Berlin were really wonderful. One saw troops on every side and every opportunity was taken for military display. Changing guard in front of the Emperor's palace at noon was an impressive spectacle, witnessed every day by crowds of people who waited patiently for the moment when the old Emperor William I would come to the window and salute his troops and be welcomed by the cheers of the onlookers. The streets were always full of officers very well dressed in military uniform and they certainly added greatly to the brightness of the capital. I believe most of the officers wore corsets and I know that at night they used to sleep with nets to keep their moustaches in position. They were absurdly particular about the fit of their uniforms and I remember so well seeing a young officer of the Cuirassiers of the Guard at a Court ball in the Palace with his white buckskin breeches so tight that he could not bend his legs, and being helped up the stairs by two stalwart soldiers from his regiment. To sit down would have been a sheer impossibility.

The old Emperor, in spite of his great age, was a remarkable man. In addition to all his work he used to attend all the balls, talked to the pretty girls, and the young men too, amongst them myself on several occasions, and at midnight always sat down to supper and ate lobster. The most enormous lobsters were always provided for the Emperor's supper, but I cannot say how much he ate of them.

There was at that time a wonderful dancer at the Opera, an Italian named Delera, who achieved the greatest popularity in Berlin. She certainly danced divinely. The old Emperor went to the Opera whenever she danced, but was not visible to the public as he invariably occupied a small box close to the stage, whence he had a good view of the stage without himself being seen. I saw her dance again twenty-four years later at the Gala performance given at the Opera during the State visit of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra to Berlin in 1909. Delera had in the meantime lost her figure and grown stout, and to those who, like myself, had seen her in her prime it was rather a pathetic spectacle. But from the applause which greeted her when she came upon and left the stage it was clear that she was still the favourite of Berlin society.

During the year I spent in Berlin I saw a great deal of the Crown Prince and Princess, who during the summer invited me about twice a week to play tennis with the young princesses at the Neues Palais, Potsdam. I was always expected to dine with them afterwards, and I must say those afternoons were very pleasant and without any stiffness whatever. The three princesses were always amusing and full of harmless chaff. Much as I loved the Crown Princess, who was always perfectly charming to me, I was really horrified sometimes at her want of tact. More than once at dinner when somebody praised something German I have heard her say that good as it might be the English substitute was infinitely better, and I could see the members of her suite squirm with displeasure. I could so well understand why Bismarck and so many Germans disliked her. But she was a very remarkable and clever woman, with extremely liberal ideas with which she succeeded in imbuing her husband the Crown Prince, and there is no doubt that she was a power in the State, and that had the Emperor Frederick lived there would have been a very different spirit in Germany. She was at the same time one of the most inquisitive people I have ever met, and she used to ply me with every sort of question of how and where I lived, what my rooms were like, what I paid my servant, etc. One day while I was staying with Lady Scott, wife of the First Secretary, who had a charming villa on the lakes at Potsdam, she swooped down on me during her morning ride and, finding me at breakfast in the garden at 8.30, asked me what I was eating, where the honey came from and a crowd of questions. This trait in her charming character always amused me greatly.

The Crown Prince, afterwards the Emperor Frederick, whose life was cut prematurely short by a terrible illness of cancer in the throat, was a

splendid man both in character and appearance. Immensely tall and broad in proportion, with a big brown beard, he was a wonderful type. He was a most charming man, full of fun and said to be a first-class general. Once at a Court ball in his palace when the Royal Family and Ambassadors were collecting at one end of the ballroom and waiting for the Crown Prince to head the procession to the supper-room, I was standing in the doorway opposite watching proceedings when I was suddenly seized from behind and lifted into the air by a strong pair of arms. Thinking it was a joke on the part of some officer I struggled desperately to free myself, and when my efforts were ineffectual, began to swear, until I saw the Crown Princess in fits of laughter at the other end of the room and realized that it must be the Crown Prince who was playing this joke upon me.

I also knew very well Prince William, eldest son of the Crown Prince and Princess, afterwards the Kaiser William, who brought so much disaster upon the world. In those days he was treated as of small importance and, being of the same age, some of the other English Attachés and I saw a good deal of him. I always regarded him as vain and superficial, but the knowledge that I then acquired of him and his character was most useful to me in later life when he was Kaiser and I was in attendance upon the late King Edward. He was a very active soldier and I often met him riding at the head of the 1st regiment of the Guard, a remarkably fine regiment, as I was on my way from Potsdam to Berlin. He had been out with his regiment since five in the morning.

It was in Berlin that I heard the story of how a Countess Hohenthal (sister to Lady Paget, wife of Sir Augustus Paget, former Ambassador in Vienna), who was a Lady in Waiting to the Empress Frederick, shortly after the birth of Prince William, was seen by the Countess Bruhl, Mistress of the Robes, and by other ladies in waiting, on the roof of the Neues Palais at Potsdam with the little baby in her arms. She called out to them "Catch him!" and pretended to throw him to them. She was rather mad, had strange ideas of free love, but eventually married a quiet respectable husband. Had this mad woman carried out her threat, what a difference there might have been in the history of the world!

During the year that I spent at Berlin our relations with Russia were very strained owing to the Russian advance to Penjdeh, an unprovoked aggression against Afghanistan which was then more or less under our protection. There was great excitement at the time and war between England and Russia was regarded as imminent. The German Press was

quite pleased and did its best to fan the flame of war. During the crisis King Edward, who was then Prince of Wales, paid a visit to Berlin, accompanied by his elder son Prince Eddie, and I remember so well being rather shocked by the indiscreet language of the Prince of Wales to the Russian Military Attaché in the hearing of a crowd of diplomatists, officers and others at a big reception in the Embassy. It only proves the value of responsibility, for nobody could have been more discreet in later years than King Edward when on the throne.

Amongst German officials, those of whom I saw the most and knew best, were Count Hatzfeldt, whom I had known as German Ambassador in Constantinople, Count Herbert Bismarck, eldest son of the Chancellor, and Count Seckendorff, private secretary to the Crown Princess.

Count Hatzfeldt was Minister for Foreign Affairs, and one of his first acts on his appointment was to have a lawn-tennis ground laid out in the garden of the Ministry. He frequently invited me to play tennis with him. At that time he was separated from his wife, who lived at Baden, but he was very devoted to her and used periodically to pay her a visit. What was curious was that it was always known when he was going, as on those occasions he used to take the official plate from the Ministry with him.

Count Herbert Bismarck at that time occupied a subordinate post in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, but he was an important personage as he served as a channel of communication with his distinguished father. After balls and evening parties the young men of the Embassy used to adjourn to a well-known *Brauerei*, where we used to regale ourselves with beer and *Kiele sprotten* (Sprats from Kiel), and Count Herbert Bismarck generally joined us at midnight or shortly after.

Count Seckendorff was a delightful personality, most loyal and devoted to the Crown Princess, knowing England and the English language thoroughly, very capable and very artistic. He was a very charming person and loved and respected by all those with whom he came into contact.

As the staff of the Embassy at Berlin were not overworked I was able to spend a good deal of time sketching on the lakes at Potsdam, and I made a delightful sketching expedition to Dresden, the Black Forest, Prague, Nuremberg and Bamberg. The staff contained four future Ambassadors ; Scott, Cartwright, Rodd and myself.

Towards the end of 1885 I obtained my promotion to the rank of Second Secretary and was informed that I was to proceed to Rio de Janeiro. I ascertained privately that Cadogan, who was next below me on the list,

VISIT TO OTTAWA

had also received his promotion and had been ordered to proceed to Washington, where there was also a vacancy. I protested strongly against the fact that the choice between Washington and Rio had not been offered to me and insisted upon my appointment being made to Washington. I succeeded in obtaining my point and was ordered to Washington, while Cadogan went to Rio.

I arrived in Washington in December 1885 at the beginning of the tenure of office of President Cleveland. Sir Lionel Sackville-West¹ was Minister and the hospitality of the Legation was dispensed most ably and successfully by his eldest daughter Victoria, afterwards Lady Sackville. Sir Lionel was one of the most silent men that I have ever met, and it was really a strange freak of fortune that this most taciturn of men should in the end have been recalled at the instigation of the American Government for a political indiscretion in writing. He was at the same time a very kind man and the year I spent at Washington was a very happy one.

Lord Lansdowne was at that time Governor-General of Canada, and as there were then many questions pending between the American and Canadian Governments on fishing rights in the Behring Sea and on the coast of Newfoundland, it was decided that Sir L. West should visit Canada in order to discuss them with Lord Lansdowne, the Governor-General. I had the good fortune to be taken by the Minister as his secretary and we spent nearly a month at Government House, Ottawa, under the happiest and most enjoyable conditions. On our way to Ottawa we had the misfortune to be snowed up in the White Mountains for twenty-four hours, and we spent the night in a wooden shanty which claimed to be an hotel. I was never so cold in my life and I remember going to bed with all my furs on in order to keep warm.

Winter sports at Ottawa were in full swing and there were endless skating, tobogganing and snow-shoeing parties, and balls on the ice which were the greatest possible fun. As a more serious experience I was present at a debate in Parliament on the Riel rebellion, which was most interesting, as a good deal of heat was displayed by the French Canadians. When one looks back upon it now what a trifling incident it was ! It was at Ottawa that I met two young Ansons, whom I had known at Harrow, and they invited me to come and stay with them on their ranch in Texas whenever I could get away from Washington. This I promised to do.

¹ Afterwards Lord Sackville.

After my return from Ottawa the season in Washington was in full swing, and very gay it was. The balls were always cotillions, and the custom there was to ask a girl beforehand to dance with you and to "bunch" her, that is to say, to send her a bouquet of flowers before coming to the ball. It was an expensive custom as a bouquet in Washington cost twenty to twenty-five dollars, but girls naturally did not like to come to balls "unbunched", and young men who engaged their partners in the ballroom were not regarded with much favour. An amusing incident, perfectly true, occurred in connection with this custom. George Barclay, one of the English Secretaries and afterwards Minister in Persia and Roumania, was paying attentions to a pretty American heiress, and having engaged her to dance a cotillion with him had bought a bouquet of flowers which had been sent to his rooms. Unfortunately on the same day he bought some pants as underwear, which were also sent to his lodgings. He wrote a note to the young lady sending her the flowers, but through real bad luck, his servant delivered the parcel of pants instead of the bouquet of flowers, and after reading the note in which she was exhorted to "wear these for my sake" she was horrified and angry when she opened the parcel of underwear. The story went round, no explanation was accepted, and there was a complete break in what might have developed into a situation of much happiness.

It was in the month of May 1886 that I obtained leave from Sir L. West to pay a visit to the Anson ranch in Texas. It was an interesting journey there through a varied and partly tropical country. The ranch was a very large sheep ranch which the elder brother Claude Anson had himself found, fenced in, built on and started before bringing out his younger brother Frank to help him. It was situated in the open prairie about seventy miles from Coleman City, which was the post town and centre of trade in those parts. I stayed with the Ansons for about five weeks and had a very hard but very interesting and healthy time. It was the sheep-washing and shearing season and we were up every morning between five and six o'clock catching the horses, milking the cows and cooking the necessary food for the day. There were no servants and we three had to do everything for ourselves and even to provide food and accommodation for the shepherds when they came in. We took it in turns to cook. I always hated it when my turn came round. The day was generally spent in the saddle, driving sheep or visiting the flocks and supervising the sheep-washing, etc., and we used to return home very tired in the evenings. The heat was very

a refreshing cool breeze at night, which blew through the wire netting doors and enabled one to sleep. It was, for instance, far too hot to try to catch a chicken in order to kill it, and we greatly preferred to shoot it with a shotgun ! It was a very pleasant time and I have very happy recollections of it. I was greatly impressed by the space and atmosphere of the prairies, with the countless prairie dogs, the rattlesnakes, the enormous wild turkeys, and above all the herds of wild horses. It was not unusual to meet thousands of cattle upon the trail driven by Mexican cowboys, who seemed always to take a pleasure in driving their herds through the large flocks of sheep we were escorting, scattering them in every direction. We cursed them freely, but had to be careful as they were always ready to shoot and we were unarmed. I believe herds on the trail are no more to be seen. On two occasions when going to fetch the post I spent a night in Coleman City in a saloon bar, and they were certainly wild and noisy nights, but a curious experience. Englishmen could not be too reserved or quiet in such company. It was very pleasant and refreshing to recognize the respect with which Claude Anson was treated by the Texans.

Shortly after my return to Washington the Minister went on leave, and all the rest of the staff went away for change of air on the plea of ill health, leaving me to bear the brunt alone of all the work during the hot weather. How hot it was ! but it was my first chance of being in charge of a Legation and I was determined to see it through, whatever happened. What made it so trying was that the temperature often rose at night and a cold bath was the only means of getting to sleep. I was always fond of riding, and I was given the use of two ponies by Isvolsky, then a Secretary at the Russian Legation and eventually Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs. Every evening I rode in the forest of Rock Creek near Washington and made the acquaintance of Mr. Bayard, who was then Secretary of State and later Ambassador in London, and we rode together nearly every day. He was kindness itself to me, and in order to help me made a point of giving me a good deal of useful information which I transmitted to the Foreign Office, and this tended to create a favourable impression at home and gave me a reputation of being really well informed. The chief question at issue at that time, in addition to fishery questions with Canada and Newfoundland, was that of an Anglo-American-German condominium in Samoa. It was initiated that year, being the first attempt of Germany to obtain a foothold in the Western Pacific, and it continued in a modified form till 1914, when

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great, every day was over 100° Fahrenheit in the shade, but there was always a refreshing cool breeze at night, which blew through the wire netting doors and enabled one to sleep. It was, for instance, far too hot to try to catch a chicken in order to kill it, and we greatly preferred to shoot it with a shotgun ! It was a very pleasant time and I have very happy recollections of it. I was greatly impressed by the space and atmosphere of the prairies, with the countless prairie dogs, the rattlesnakes, the enormous wild turkeys, and above all the herds of wild horses. It was not unusual to meet thousands of cattle upon the trail driven by Mexican cowboys, who seemed always to take a pleasure in driving their herds through the large flocks of sheep we were escorting, scattering them in every direction. We cursed them freely, but had to be careful as they were always ready to shoot and we were unarmed. I believe herds on the trail are no more to be seen. On two occasions when going to fetch the post I spent a night in Coleman City in a saloon bar, and they were certainly wild and noisy nights, but a curious experience. Englishmen could not be too reserved or quiet in such company. It was very pleasant and refreshing to recognize the respect with which Claude Anson was treated by the Texans.

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Samoa was seized by the Allies and wrested from German influence and control.

Nowadays the Embassy is always moved from Washington during the hot weather to some more temperate spot in the United States, but this was not permitted in those days, though the surroundings of Washington are now much healthier than they were. In 1886 the marshes of the Potomac reached almost up to the White House, and malaria was in consequence very prevalent during the hot weather. I suffered a good deal from this, and in the late autumn the doctor at Washington advised me to go home and not to return. This advice I followed and reached home in November.

Washington was a comparatively small city in those days, but such a pretty one with its lawns and gardens facing some of the principal streets. I was even then greatly impressed by the way in which the city was laid out with wonderful vistas, and when I had to supervise the layout and planning of New Delhi thirty years later, the first thing I did was to send for plans of Washington and Paris. The Washingtonians were extraordinarily kind and hospitable and it was entirely the fault of any young diplomatist if he did not have a really good time. The members of the British Legation were also in an exceptionally favoured position and I was altogether very happy in Washington. At the same time I did a good deal of independent work, and amongst my papers I find copies of two exhaustive reports that I wrote on the extraction of sugar from sorghum and on the Homestead and Exemption laws in the United States. For both of these reports I received the thanks of the Secretary of State and an expression of appreciation from the Director of Kew Gardens for the former. Both reports were printed and presented to Parliament.

CHAPTER IV

SOFIA AND CONSTANTINOPLE, 1887-1892

ON my return to England, Lord Iddesleigh, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, transferred me to the Foreign Office for a period of six months, and I was appointed to the Eastern Department, Cecil Spring Rice being sent to Washington in my place. This was the beginning of his connection with Washington, where he was eventually appointed Ambassador and remained there till his death during the Great War. Sir T. Sanderson was head of the Eastern Department and a very able one too, though dreadfully fussy. At that time there was a serious crisis in Bulgaria, culminating in the kidnapping of Prince Alexander and finally his resignation of his position as Ruler of Bulgaria. It was during those few months at the Foreign Office that I first realized the part played by Queen Victoria in foreign affairs, and I well remember some of her marginal notes on the despatches sent to her for perusal. They were much to the point but very feminine in expression. "Those *horrid* Bulgarians!" was one.

One afternoon in April 1887, while I was at work in the Eastern Department, Eric Barrington, Private Secretary to Lord Salisbury, who had become Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs after the death of Lord Iddesleigh, came into the room and complained that he could not find any young Secretary to go to Sofia to relieve the Secretary there who had to come home. Sofia was then the centre of interest in Europe and I realized that if I went there I would, being the only Secretary at the post, be certain before long to have a good spell as *Chargé d'Affaires* at a most interesting post when Sir N. O'Connor, who was the Chief, went home on leave. I therefore said at once that I would undertake to go there. He told me I would have to start at once. It was settled that I should have two days to collect my kit and to say good-bye to my family, and within forty-eight hours I left for Sofia.

The political situation of Bulgaria was extremely critical in 1887. Bul-

garian sentiments of gratitude towards Russia for her liberation of Bulgaria from the Turkish yoke had gradually evaporated owing to her despotic interference and want of tact. The union of Eastern Roumelia with Bulgaria in 1885 under the rule of Prince Alexander without previous consultation with Russia was the last blow to Russian prestige, which Russia deeply resented, and in order to inflict as great an injury as possible upon Bulgaria the Emperor of Russia recalled every Russian officer in the country, thereby depriving the Bulgarian army of all its leaders. The opportunity was seized by Servia to attack Bulgaria with a view to extending her own frontiers at the expense of Bulgaria, and war broke out between the two countries in November 1885. The invading Servians were thoroughly routed by the Bulgarians at the Battle of Slivnitza under the leadership of Prince Alexander, but when the moment arrived for the victorious Bulgarians to cross the Servian frontier the Austrian Government intervened with the menace that Austria would not allow Servia to be crushed, and that if the Bulgarians made any further advance they would be opposed by the Austrians also. Peace was concluded almost immediately without any advantage to Bulgaria, not even a war indemnity. The prestige of Russia in Bulgaria thus sank lower and lower, and in order to recover their position, the Russian Government, through their Agents in Bulgaria, were in complicity with Bulgarian traitors who succeeded in August 1886 in effecting a *coup d'état* in Sofia and in abducting Prince Alexander. A counter-revolution engineered by Messrs. Stambouloff and Mutkuroff succeeded in the restoration of the Prince, who returned in triumph to his people. His stay in Bulgaria was only of short duration, as, being a weak man, he was intimidated by Russia, and finally offered to return his crown to the Emperor who had given it to him. The offer was promptly accepted by the Emperor of Russia, the Prince abdicated and left Bulgaria for ever, and a Regency was appointed, composed of M. Stambouloff, Colonel Mutkuroff and M. Stoiloff. The Russian Government made a further effort to recover the ground they had lost by despatching General Kaulbars on a special mission to advise the Bulgarians. In this they failed again, thanks to the arrogance of the General and the intrigues which he instituted, ending in a plot against the Government at Bourgas, where a number of insurgents obtained possession temporarily of the town until the rising was suppressed by the Bulgarian troops. This ended in the recall of General Kaulbars and all Russian diplomatic and other officials from Bulgaria. Such was the political situation, and a very interesting one, when I left for Sofia in April 1887.

In those days Sofia was not as accessible as at present. There was no railway beyond Nish and no connecting-link between the two termini at Nish and Philippopolis. The journey from Nish to Sofia took two days to drive in a little victoria with four ponies harnessed abreast on an infamous road but through a lovely country. It was beautiful spring weather and I enjoyed my two days' drive in spite of the discomforts of Nish and Pirot, where I had to stay the night. Sofia was a very small and primitive town of only about 20,000 inhabitants, and composed of the old Turkish quarter and a few streets of third-rate modern houses and one hotel of an indifferent type. It was wonderfully situated on a high plateau under a big mountain called the Vitosch, the result being that the climate was extremely cold in winter and very hot in summer. In winter there was continuous skating for three months. It was very difficult to find any accommodation in Sofia, but eventually I managed to hire a whitewashed room in a small Bulgarian house for myself with a sort of cupboard adjoining in which my native servant seemed quite at home and contented. Eventually I found a small house of four rooms with an enclosure in which the Vice-Consul and I and our two servants lived, if not luxuriously, at least fairly comfortably. As it turned out I had to spend two years and nine months at Sofia, during which I was at different times acting as *Chargé d'Affaires* for periods amounting to about twelve months. My acceptance of the post was therefore more than justified by results. I was, on the whole, very happy there. The political situation was of absorbing interest, there were no social duties, and one could live very much as one liked. There was very good quail, partridge, snipe and woodcock shooting in the autumn and lovely excursions to be made on horseback into the mountains, which I thoroughly explored. The most interesting resort for an expedition was the monastery at Rilo in the Balkans, where the frontiers of Bulgaria, Servia and Turkey meet. The monastery is a fine building, but very primitive in its accommodation. The compensation for discomfort was the extraordinary beauty of the scenery. In the winter I was able to relieve the monotony and isolation of Sofia by visits to Belgrade, Bucharest, Philippopolis and Constantinople, where an exchange of views with the Heads of the British Missions was always very helpful.

At the time of my arrival in Sofia the Regents were fulfilling the arduous task of governing the country without the assistance of the Russian officials and officers who had hitherto played a leading rôle in the administration. Their task was greatly facilitated by the loyalty and patriotism of the people

and the army, who were determined to give no excuse for a Russian occupation of their country. The task immediately before the Regents was to find a prince to succeed to the throne of Prince Alexander. The Russians made one more futile attempt to recover their lost position by putting forward the candidature of the Prince of Mingrelia, a suggestion which was rejected as soon as it was made. Prince Waldemar of Denmark was elected by the Bulgarian Parliament, and on his refusal to accept the post a deputation of Bulgarian leaders was sent to the various courts of Europe to place before them the true situation in Bulgaria with a view to discovering a candidate for the throne. Finally, Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg put forward his own candidature for the post, and after his election by the Bulgarian Parliament he accepted the sovereignty and ascended to the throne of Bulgaria at Tirnovo in August 1887. I well remember his State entry into Sofia and the disparaging remarks made upon his appearance and haughty manner by the ultra-democratic Bulgarians. People of well-balanced views said on all sides that he would not be there for six months, but they little knew or understood his tenacity of purpose, for after all he remained on the throne of Bulgaria for thirty years and his son reigned in his place as King.

Although the Turkish Government refused to confirm his appointment, or the Powers to approve his election on the ground that it was contrary to the terms of the Treaty of Berlin, Prince Ferdinand himself was the only person who really minded the fact that the Representatives of the Great Powers had no official relations with the Bulgarian Court. It was very galling to his pride that the foreign Representatives refused to come to Court, but, as they were in close official relations with the Bulgarian Government, it was more or less immaterial to the Government whether the Corps Diplomatique attended Court functions or not. After a few months I succeeded in establishing personal friendly relations with the Prince, and it always amused me greatly to meet him as he was very witty and loved to joke about the ways and habits of his Ministers and Court officials. I remember well his telling me how a military official at his Court had in the middle of a State dinner taken off his boot and brought it above the table to see what it was that was hurting his foot, and his description of the incident was as good as a play. He was very French in all his thoughts and ways, a typical "boulevardier", and prided himself greatly on being the grandson of King Louis Philippe. His mother, Princess Clementine of Saxe-Coburg, daughter of King Louis Philippe, came and stayed with him for long periods at Sofia, and I always noticed that political affairs went well

during her presence, thanks greatly to the advice he received from her. I knew her well and she was an extraordinarily clever woman, full of character and of good wisdom, but very deaf.

The Minister I knew best was M. Stambouloff, the Prime Minister, with whom I was always on most friendly terms. I had great respect for his ability, courage and determination. He always realized that he was in danger of assassination, but that never intimidated him for an instant or diverted him from his intentions. In interviews which he gave me in his private house, he used to sit at a table with his back to the wall and a Winchester rifle leaning against a piece of furniture at his elbow. He prided himself on being always ready for anything. This did not, unfortunately, save him from assassination in the end. He was a great patriot and the real saviour of Bulgaria, but too powerful and independent to suit the views of his Ruler.

The other Ministers were very ordinary people, peasants by birth and training, the best of them being Grekoff and Stoiloff. The former was of Bessarabian origin and the latter had been educated at the Bulgarian College in Constantinople.

The Macedonian question was already a burning one in Bulgaria, and the defeat of Serbia in the Serbo-Bulgarian War had added to the claims of the Bulgarians and fomented Bulgarian propaganda. It must be remembered that a considerable Macedonian contingent, organized and led by a certain Major Panitza, had fought with Prince Alexander against the Servians in a victorious war, and these on their return to Macedonia very naturally attempted to impose their victorious position upon the Macedonians of Servian origin, resulting in wholesale murders and general lawlessness which the Turkish authorities were quite unable to prevent or control. It may be doubted even whether the Turks really ever tried to maintain peace in these districts, their policy being always that of a *tertius gaudens*. I may mention that Major Panitza, whom I knew well as an attractive personality, was eventually tried, condemned and executed by Prince Ferdinand's Government for treason. Major Panitza was a fine fellow, but he hated Prince Ferdinand from the moment of their very first meeting, and I was not surprised as the character and attitude of the two men were absolutely antagonistic and hostile to each other. At the same time there was great rivalry between the Greeks and Bulgarians in Macedonia, especially in the Vilayet of Monastir, which both nationalities claimed to be within their respective spheres of influence and which served as a pretext for their mutual

persecution and extermination, the Turks looking on placidly meanwhile. Still, this situation presented serious dangers and it was in September 1888 that the Bulgarian Agent at Constantinople, Dr. Vulcovitch, was the victim of an intrigue of the Italian Ambassador Baron Blanc, who assured him that if the Bulgarians intervened by force in Macedonia they would receive the active support of the friendly Powers, that Italy would certainly send her fleet to Salonica, and that by this step they would be able to secure possession of a large slice of territory, together with the recognition of the Prince and the independence of a big Bulgaria. Stambouloff disbelieved Dr. Vulcovitch's report as the idea of such an agreement amongst the Powers contrasted with the advice I had repeatedly given him since the commencement of the agitation, but he thought it worth while to send Stoiloff to London to make inquiries of Lord Salisbury, who gave the whole idea a douche of very cold water. Signor Crispi issued later a *démenti*, but knowing Baron Blanc as I did later, I am convinced that the latter had not acted without instructions from his Government. Stambouloff asked me to assure Lord Salisbury that the Government were not meditating any such policy of adventure where they would run the risk of losing as much as they would gain.

It was during these years I spent in Bulgaria that I first knew Baron Burian, Austrian Diplomatic Agent in Bulgaria, and eventually Austrian Chancellor shortly before the outbreak of the 1914-18 war. He was a very clever, cynical man, formerly Austrian Consul at Moscow, and he always spoke of and treated the Bulgarians with the utmost contempt. While the official policy of the Austrian Government was to support and preserve the integrity and independence of Bulgaria against Russia, the hectoring and bullying tone assumed by Burian towards the Ministers and more especially towards Stambouloff, and the pressure he applied to obtain usurious concessions for Austrian Jews, made relations strained between the Government and the Austrian Agency and provoked Stambouloff on one occasion to say in irritation, "Austro-Hungarian friendship is too expensive for what it is worth." It was hard for the Bulgarians to distinguish between the acts of the Austrian Government and the faults of its Agents. Still, the policy of the Austrian Government was the policy of the British Government and I did all I could to smooth the relations between Burian and Stambouloff, and the latter thanked me more than once for the success of my efforts.

At that time we used to send and receive our Foreign Office bags through

the Austrian messengers to and from Vienna, the bags going from there by Queen's messengers. An indiscreet remark by Burian one day made me think that he had access to the contents of our bag. To ascertain whether this was so or not we filled with lead the hollow of the lion's tail in the Royal Arms on the official seal, so that in the wax impression the lion was tail-less and we inquired from the Embassy at Vienna whether when the bag was handed over to them the lion had a tail or not. The answer was that the lion had a tail, so we knew that either the Austrian Agency or the Ministry for Foreign Affairs at Vienna had made an imitation of the British official seal and had used it to close our bags after opening them. I let Burian know that we knew, and we never made use of the Austrian messengers again.

Another incident of interest took place while I was at Sofia. A certain Captain Nabokoff, an officer in the Russian Army and son of the actual Russian Minister of Justice, landed near Varna with some other Russians and tried to create a rising of the population against the Government. This buccaneering expedition was a complete failure since the Bulgarian militia turned out and caught and shot the whole lot. The Bulgarian Press made great capital out of the fact that the leader of this ill-fated expedition was the son of the Russian Minister of Justice, which was met by a flat denial in the Russian Press. The Bulgarians were not to be defeated by such denials and as it was winter when the ground was frozen hard they exhumed the body of Captain Nabokoff, dressed him up in his uniform with his decorations and photographed his body leaning against the trunk of a tree. This photograph was sent to the Russian Press as a *pièce de conviction* and I received also from the Government a copy of this strange and gruesome photograph. He was a relation of M. Nabokoff, later Councillor of the Russian Embassy in London.

I was fortunate in having as Vice-Consul (afterwards Sir) Robert Graves, as we lived, worked and shot together. He was a very good sportsman, a thorough gentleman and a pleasant companion. His only fault was that he was slow of speech, but he had sound judgment when you reached it. The principal Consular Officer in Bulgaria was Captain Jones, V.C., Consul-General at Philippopolis, generally known as "Inkerman Jones". He was a good officer, though possibly too downright in his methods. It appears that when he won his V.C. he was left for dead on the battlefield, being riddled with bullets, but while laid out with the dead he showed signs of life and recovered. When I was his guest at

Philippopolis he was suffering from what he said was toothache and a very swollen face. As the swelling under his jaw had a hard and inflamed appearance I persuaded him to see the local doctor, who immediately lanced the swelling and extracted a large "Brown Bess" bullet which must have lodged under his jaw for thirty years.

Some months before I was to leave Sofia I had three very good offers made to me. Lord Dufferin asked me to rejoin him at his Embassy in Rome, a proposal which attracted me strongly; an offer was made to me to serve under Sir Augustus Paget at Vienna; and lastly Sir William White wanted me to come to Constantinople. All three were good offers as I was in each case to be the Senior Second Secretary, or head of the Chancery for which rank I was exceptionally young. I weighed all these offers very carefully and finally decided to go to Constantinople as being certain to give me work for which I had had both training and local experience, and as more likely to lead to openings for advancement in the service. In this forecast time showed that I was right.

I left Sofia in the middle of February 1889 to take up my post at Constantinople under Sir William White. I had already made his acquaintance when he was Minister in Bucharest as I was passing through that capital on my way to Constantinople. He was indeed a very remarkable man and had achieved an extraordinary career. His father, a Scotsman, managed the estates of Prince Sartorinski in Poland, and he must have been a reproduction of the Prince, for he was exactly like a miniature portrait of the Prince that was on his table. He spoke English with a Scotch and foreign accent and could only write very indifferent English of which he was quite aware, since he used to ask the staff to correct and polish up his despatches to the Foreign Office. There was a period in Sir W. White's life of which nothing is known until he became a clerk in the Consulate-General at Warsaw at the age of 37. By sheer ability he made his way into the Diplomatic Service and first attracted the attention of his superiors when he went to Constantinople during Lord Salisbury's mission to Turkey before the Russo-Turkish War of 1878. He greatly impressed Lord Salisbury by his extraordinary knowledge of Near-Eastern politics and by his acquaintance with all the scoundrels and worst political characters in Europe. He was a man after Lord Salisbury's own heart, bluff, very capable and not too scrupulous! After the Russo-Turkish War he became Minister at Belgrade and later at Bucharest. It was when Sir E. Thornton was recalled from Constantinople that Sir W. White was sent there with

Minister's rank as locum tenens, and it was with this severe handicap against him that he was so successful in defeating the machinations of Nelidoff and Radowitz, the Russian and German Ambassadors, that he was finally confirmed as British Ambassador. In those days the other Ambassadors looked down upon Sir W. White as an ex-Consul, but a year or two later they never moved in any matter without first talking it over with him. His ability was exceptional and his knowledge of Eastern Europe unrivalled. He was extraordinarily shrewd, one might almost say cunning, but his idea of diplomacy was the *brutum fulmen* rather than the iron hand in the velvet glove. I learnt a lot from him. His diplomacy was absolutely the antithesis of that of Lord Dufferin. They were the protagonists of two opposite schools of diplomacy and I was fortunate to have served under both. At the same time he was a man of violent and disagreeable temper, a bully and, like all bullies, a coward when tackled. On one occasion when I disagreed with him on a political question he became so angry that he brought his fist down with such violence on a small table that he smashed it to pieces and in his rage told me that he would kick such ideas as I had out of my head. I told him quietly that I would not tolerate such language even from my Ambassador and left the room. When I reached the foot of the stairs I heard him call for me to come up again, and when there he asked me how soon I wanted to take some leave, which I may add he had already refused, the result being that I went home on leave at the moment I had selected. He was a very religious Roman Catholic and I always knew when he was meditating some doubtful scheme as he would then spend hours walking up and down the corridors crossing himself all the time. Except for an occasional outburst we always got on very well together as he found me a useful member of his Embassy and I always admired his ability and courage.

Lady White was a German, the daughter of a tobacconist in Dantzig. She was said to have been beautiful in her younger days and to have had many successes. She was a common woman greatly lacking in dignity and *savoir faire*. After a ball at the Embassy she was seen in the kitchen collecting the remains of the ball supper, or, as I saw her once, buying live turkeys in the main street of Pera and feeling which was the fattest. There were endless stories of Lady White and her doings which did not redound to her credit as Ambassadress. I often compared her with my memories of a former Ambassadress at Constantinople, Lady Dufferin, and the comparison was not pleasing.

After spending two months at Constantinople I went home on four

to see the Prince were repeated, and it was added "that no concessions could be made by the Italian Government, who demanded full reparation and that they were ready to proceed to any extremity". Sonnaz saw the Prince but, being a conciliatory man, he succeeded in leaving the question dormant, and a month later Crispi's Government fell. He seemed to have done all in his power to provoke his fall by his imperious and overbearing attitude, and by a violent outburst in the Chamber against a party of the Right that was supporting him. There were no outstanding Italian statesmen, but he was succeeded by Rudini who, though more friendly to the Bulgarians than Crispi, was not in a position to make any important change in Italy's foreign policy, since the Triple Alliance was more necessary to Italy than to either Germany or Austria and she was bound hard and fast by Treaty till 1892.

Stambouloff made proposals to me for a new Anglo-Bulgarian Commercial Treaty in which he would concede to British trade most advantageous terms in return for a renunciation of the system of capitulations still in force in Bulgaria. I was greatly in favour of pursuing this proposal in view of the possible advantages to be gained for our trade, while the capitulations remained practically a dead letter owing to the very small number of British subjects in Bulgaria. I reported the matter to the Foreign Office, but nothing transpired before my departure from Bulgaria.

Colonel Moutkoroff, Minister of War, one of the triumvirate of the Regency, died in the early spring and there was a great State funeral which everybody attended. A fact which impressed the funeral on my memory was that in the lid of the coffin a glass window had been inserted so that the dead man's face was visible to all, a most gruesome spectacle. All the Bulgarian officials kissed the glass.

Another dreadful tragedy occurred during our stay, in the murder of M. Beltcheff, the Minister of Finance, a charming person of Western culture. He was killed by mistake for Stambouloff. The two were walking in the public garden when they were attacked by a man with a revolver who fired several shots at them. Stambouloff escaped by flight, but Beltcheff fell at once. We were at dinner at the Agency and heard the shots quite plainly. The crime was attributed to Stambouloff's enemy Karaveloff and to the Russian Panslavists. Neither the murderer nor his instigators or abettors were ever captured, but the opportunity was seized to loot Karaveloff's house in spite of its vigorous defence by Mme Karaveloff.

A MINOR TRAGEDY

A tragedy of a minor character occurred in the Agency. Lady O'Connor had entrusted a dachshund to the care of my wife during her absence and Winifred was quite fond of it. It was lying on her bed when I went in to see her one morning and she remarked that it had been behaving in a very strange manner. I opened the door and the dog rushed out downstairs and nearly bit the Vice-Consul in the hand. As the dog seemed very strange, I shut it up in the stable and gave orders that it was not to be let out. Shortly afterwards I heard a row in the yard and saw the dog rush through the gate into the street, pursued by the Cavass. The dog bit several other dogs and finally bit the Cavass in the hand before he succeeded in catching it and shutting it up. The Cavass went straight into the kitchen and cut out a large chunk of flesh from his hand, which probably saved his life, as two days later the dog died of rabies and all the other dogs bitten died of it too. This was not however the end of our troubles from this dog, as six weeks later one of a pair of very nice horses belonging to Sir N. O'Connor also went mad, having probably been bitten in the heel by the dachshund.

An amusing incident occurred when Philip Stanhope, afterwards Lord Weardale, who had married Countess Tolstoi, came to Sofia and called upon me. This was at the time when he was an M.P. and took an active part in the "No Rent" movement in Ireland. I asked him why he had come to Sofia and he said that he was on his way to Bessarabia to collect his wife's rents and mentioned incidentally that Grecoff, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, was one of her tenants. I told him that I would certainly acquaint Grecoff with his views about the payment of rent and that what was right as regards absentee landlords in Ireland must be equally right for absentee landlords in Bessarabia. He protested vigorously against my doing so, but of course it was only a joke on my part.

A personal incident occurred while at Sofia which upset me dreadfully for some time. It was on the 2nd February 1891 that Eric Barrington, Lord Salisbury's Private Secretary, wrote to me saying, "Lord Salisbury wants to strengthen the Chancery at Cairo and wishes you to go there when your Chargéship is up. I don't think you will like the idea much, I am afraid you will lose a little money by it, though we must try to prevent that. However, it is a compliment and you will have to submit." From this I gathered that I was to be the second of the Junior Secretaries, Portal, who was my senior by about six months, being above me. As I was the Senior of the Junior Secretaries at the Embassy at Constantinople I did not see the

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point of being second at the smaller post in Cairo with a loss of pay as I was told. I therefore asked to be excused and gave my reasons, and Lord Salisbury in a very nice letter to my father withdrew the proposal. Imagine my horror when I found that Lord Salisbury had selected me to succeed Portal, who had been appointed to Zanzibar, and that the situation had, quite unintentionally I am sure, been entirely misrepresented to me. It was too late when I discovered the true facts, as my cousin Arthur Hardinge had been already appointed. Everybody not knowing the contents of Barrington's letter thought I had made a great mistake, and some of my best friends told me that I had quite spoilt for ever my chances of making a good career. I was terribly depressed for a long time and thought I would never get over it, but I did before long, as events to be described will show.

I returned to Constantinople from leave in September of that year and remained peaceably there, my eldest boy being born on the 3rd May 1892. He was very delicate when born and I used to walk for hours up and down my room with him in my arms as I was the only person who could make him sleep. At the beginning of June Winifred went home by sea with my boy and a goat to feed him, and he soon got strong after arriving in England.

It was in October 1891 that my father-in-law, Lord Alington, accompanied by his two daughters, afterwards Lady Chelsea and Mrs. Vincent Corbett, paid us a visit of a month at Constantinople. Being a very rich and very extravagant man, Lord Alington came by a special train all the way from Vienna, and this fact so impressed the Sultan and the Turkish Government that they believed him to have a special mission, with the result that he was received on his arrival with great ceremony, and one of the Sultan's aides-de-camp was personally attached to him during the whole of his stay. This made his visit a complete success, and everything was open to him and his daughters, and the Sultan gave him and his three daughters a big dinner at the Palace and introduced the daughters afterwards to the ladies of the Harem. When the Sultan heard that my wife could play the violin, a viola was found which she had to play to the accompaniment of a cracked piano played by her sister, but as there was nobody there who had any idea of music, the Sultan was so pleased that he conferred upon them all the Order of the Shefakat and the "médaille des beaux arts"!

Not very long after my return to Constantinople Sir William White, who had gone to England on leave, died quite suddenly from a chill con-

tracted on the journey. His death was a great loss politically and I heard the news with great regret, for I had a great admiration of his powerful and impressive personality.

Sir William White was succeeded by Sir Clare Ford, Minister in Madrid. The appointment was a deplorable one in every way, for he was wanting both in capacity and knowledge. The political prestige of the Embassy dwindled very rapidly in his hands.

During Sir William White's tenure of office as Ambassador at Constantinople our relations with the Turks were often very strained, chiefly owing to the support we had given to the Bulgarians in the East Roumelian revolution, when the province of Eastern Roumelia became incorporated in the Bulgarian Principality. At the same time German influence at the Sublime Porte was steadily and rapidly growing under the skilful handling of Count Radowitz, the German Ambassador, who profited by the dislike of England and the fear of Russia by the Turks to advance the interests of his own country in Turkey. Sir William White did all he could to encourage and foster German initiative in Turkey as a counterpoise to Russian influence which for a long time had been predominant in Turkey and always openly hostile to British policy in the Near East. This policy he pursued especially in connection with the Bagdad Railway enterprise, which he supported for all he was worth. Sir William, owing to his Polish antecedents, was bitterly hostile to Russia and seized every opportunity to make his hostility felt. Whether his policy in encouraging and supporting German influence in Turkey was a wise one is now, after this lapse of time and development of events, an open question, but in any case the railway had not, till the time of Hitler, fallen under the influence or into the hands of either Germany or Russia.

The question of the passage of the Straits, though not a new one, was in those years under constant discussion and I have an interesting memorandum written by General Brackenbury, Director of Military Intelligence, dealing with an attempt then being made by Nelidoff, the Russia Ambassador, to obtain from the Turks a declaration of the neutrality of Turkey in the event of war. General Brackenbury's view was that the only neutrality possible for Turkey was a free waterway. This would obviously not suit Russia since it would open the way to the Black Sea, and as Russia would obviously not have the keys of the Straits in the hands of the Turks she would insist on closing them herself. The question therefore of getting to Constantinople could only be solved by risking war. Russia would

always be nearer and could therefore always get there first, in which case it would be necessary for England or any other Power to fight its way in under great difficulties. If another Power reached Constantinople first the situation would be reversed and Russia would have to fight her way in, which she would not dare to attempt. To the Power that holds the gates between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, Turkey must be, and would be compelled to be, an Ally. "To find an excuse for going there, and once there to stay there, was Blanc's (the Italian Ambassador) proposal. We should certainly risk bringing on war, but sooner or later war will come, and in the one case we should begin with the gates of the citadel in our hands, in the other case with those gates in the hands of the enemy." These words of General Brackenbury proved to be prophetically true twenty-five years later, though he little expected then that it would be the Germans and not the Russians who would hold the gates. Had the British Mediterranean Squadron pursued the *Goeben* into the Dardanelles when she sought refuge there in August 1914 the whole course of the war might have been profoundly modified, and as General Brackenbury said, "Turkey must be, and would be compelled to be, an Ally."

It was about that time that Admiral Tryon, commanding the Mediterranean Squadron, paid a ceremonial visit to the Sultan. He reported to the Ambassador that he had noticed when entering the Dardanelles a new fort in course of construction at Besika Bay, of which he had received no information from our Military Attaché. Sir W. White at once gave orders to the Military Attaché, Colonel Trotter, to go to the Dardanelles to obtain information about it and told me I was to go to assist him in any way I could. We went as travellers to visit the ruins of Troy, our objective being the tomb of Achilles, which commanded a view of Besika Bay. From the top of the mound we could see plainly the fort, which appeared unoccupied, so we rode cautiously to the fort without meeting a soul either inside or out. Having taken measurements and made plans, we sat down in a warm corner and had our luncheon. Our repast was unexpectedly interrupted by soldiers who returned from washing on the shore and arrested us both. After some time we were taken before the officer in command, who said he would send us under arrest to Constantinople. I pointed out to him that we had nothing to fear as we had walked into what appeared to be an unoccupied fort in order to get shelter from the wind and that we would certainly prove that there had been no sentries to prevent us entering or any indication that entry was forbidden. He

MOVE TO BUCHAREST

quickly saw the force of this point, and as I had taken the precaution of bringing along with me a bottle of cherry brandy from our interrupted luncheon, I offered him some as syrup, in order not to offend his Mahomedan susceptibilities, and he liked it so much and drank so many glasses that I left the bottle with him and he allowed the Colonel and me to mount our ponies, and we galloped off as fast as we could to get clear of him and his soldiers. Fortunately he had not thought of examining the contents of our saddle-bags, where the drawings and measurements of the fort would have been found.

Happily I had not to remain for many months under Sir Clare Ford, for I found it almost impossible to carry on the work of the Chancery with a Chief who was profoundly ignorant of the situation and conditions in Turkey, and who would not try to learn, being confident of his own superior knowledge. He brought a mistress with him, a fact which was soon known to the Turks and everybody else, and which did not add to his prestige, especially with the Turks. I often felt greatly depressed and regretted deeply the muddle that had been made a year earlier in connection with the offer of a post in Cairo, but all this was changed when I received unexpectedly in July 1892 a telegram from Lord Salisbury's Private Secretary inviting me to go to Bucharest to supersede Vansittart, the acting Chargé d'Affaires, and to negotiate and conclude the Marriage Treaty of the Duke of Edinburgh's daughter with the Crown Prince of Roumania, afterwards King and Queen of Roumania. As there was some delay in removing Vansittart, I went home for a few weeks' leave and went with Winifred to Bucharest in September of that year. As the weather was still hot we went to Sinaia and lived there for some weeks, I going backwards and forwards to Bucharest whenever it was necessary to do so for my official work.

CHAPTER V

BUCHAREST AND PARIS, 1892-1896

IT was at Sinaia that I first made the acquaintance of King Charles, and of his nephew and heir, Prince Ferdinand, later King of Roumania. The King was always nice to us in his very courtly way, and we often lunched at the Castle Pelesch at Sinaia. He was a clever man but a Hohenzollern through and through. Prince Ferdinand was a very stupid young man with large protruding ears and was nicknamed Prince "Doch", for whatever anybody said to him the invariable reply used to be "Doch! Doch!" Také Jonesco was then a rising politician, a very agreeable person, and we saw a good deal of him and his English wife while living in the mountains. The Carpathians are of singular beauty at Sinaia and gave opportunities for endless excursions.

After some weeks at Sinaia we took up our abode for six or seven months at the only hotel in Bucharest, the Hotel D'Europe, run by an Englishwoman named Mrs. Horn. She was a strange but capable woman who knew everybody and whom everybody in Bucharest knew. Her hotel was full at all times with diplomatists and statesmen from the neighbouring Balkan States and, for want of a better place, was a general rendezvous for everybody late in the afternoon. It was in reality a horrid hotel, but there was no Legation House at that time and nowhere else to stay. Bucharest was very primitive and uncomfortable in those days, with only one fine street, and even there the houses were only built for external show, many of them being without a supply of water and extremely insanitary. Nevertheless, the Roumanians always prided themselves on it being the Paris of the East, this being their ideal. It must be mentioned that the education of cultured Roumanians was almost always French, Paris being the usual resort of young Roumanians, where they acquired an external French veneer which concealed their natural Oriental characteristics. Owing to the laxity of morals and the looseness of their divorce laws, Roumanian society was hopelessly complicated and involved, due to

the number of people divorced, married to others who had been divorced and with sometimes families of more than one previous marriage on either side. So much was this the case that before the marriage of Princess Marie to the Crown Prince, the King experienced considerable difficulty in finding a lady to act as Mistress of the Princess's Household unconnected with any scandal. The lady was found and Sir Henry Ponsonby, Queen Victoria's Private Secretary, wrote to me, "We were glad to learn the name of the pure Madame Greciano."

When I arrived in Roumania my first task was the conclusion of the Marriage Treaty of Princess Marie and the Crown Prince. It was a very simple transaction, its principal clause being the renunciation by Princess Marie, owing to her marriage to a Roman Catholic, of all claims to succession to the British Throne. Nevertheless it took months to conclude and was signed by M. Lahovary, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and myself on the 15th December 1892. In the meantime I had plenty of other work with which to occupy myself and especially the commercial situation, which was creating much excitement and indignation in Lancashire, owing to the prohibition of the entry of British cotton goods into Roumania. Before I had been a month in Bucharest I succeeded in obtaining the removal of this prohibition, and I was greatly encouraged by receiving a charming little note from Lord Rosebery, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in which he said, "I am anxious that you should know from myself the pleasure with which I learned your prompt success in the matter of the removal of the prohibition of the entry of British cotton goods into Roumania." It is by thoughtful little attentions of this kind that good public servants are made and the best work obtained from them.

Finding the situation favourable, I commenced negotiations with the Roumanian Government for the conclusion of an Extradition Treaty between Great Britain and Roumania, there being no treaty of that kind between the two countries, and also a Convention respecting false indications of origin on goods. I was able to sign both these treaties before I left Bucharest, but the negotiations of the Extradition Treaty presented great difficulties for me as it entailed long discussions on legal points which were new and unfamiliar and there was no English lawyer in Bucharest to help and advise me on points raised which were not covered by my instructions. However, common sense prevailed and the Treaty was concluded and signed.

It was at Bucharest that I had the opportunity of making close acquaint-

ance with Count Goluchowski and Count Bülow, the Austrian and German Ministers, both of whom became eventually Chancellors in their respective countries. This acquaintance was extremely useful to me later on. Both of them were very agreeable and charming friends, particularly Count Goluchowski, who, in spite of being a Pole, was extremely trustworthy, which, as was well known, was the last term one could apply to Count Bülow. The wives of both were charming, Countess Goluchowska being French, a Princess Murat, and Countess Bülow Italian. The former became a great friend of my wife.

In the meantime the marriage of the Crown Prince and Princess Marie took place at Coburg in January 1893 and the newly married couple arrived in Bucharest at the beginning of February. I was present with Winifred at the railway station to receive the Princess and, as the Queen's representative, was the first to receive her on alighting from the train. It was a bright snowy morning, and as the Princess, who was only 17 years old, appeared on the step of the railway carriage dressed in a white fur cap and a long old rose-coloured coat trimmed with ermine, she, with her delicate features and matchless complexion, was indeed a dream of beauty and literally transfixed the crowd of officials, etc., assembled to greet Her Royal Highness. Thirty years later I reminded the Queen, as she then was, of the deep impression made upon me, and she challenged me to describe her clothes on that occasion, which I did successfully.

Then followed a series of fêtes, dinners, balls and receptions in honour of the marriage, the only curious function being the simultaneous marriage of thirty couples of Roumanian peasants in the Cathedral at which the Crown Prince and Princess were present, each couple receiving a dowry from the State. I will only mention one other function, a ball given by the Municipality, to which all the Corps Diplomatique was invited, the men to go in uniform and the ladies in Roumanian dress. I maintained that if the Municipality invited the Corps Diplomatique to come in uniform to their ball they had no right to prescribe Roumanian national dress for the ladies of the Corps, and Winifred felt very strongly on the subject and even told the King that she declined to wear Roumanian dress. The King said nothing, but on the morning of the ball Winifred received a note from the King sending her a magnificent Roumanian dress and asking her to do him the pleasure of wearing it at the ball. She had to capitulate and wear it. Unfortunately she felt very ill that evening, and had there been no question of this Roumanian dress she would certainly not have gone



LADY HARDINGE OF PENSHURST, C.I.
IN ROUMANIAN NATIONAL DRESS

to the ball, for she had a high temperature and a splitting headache, and had to be fortified with champagne before she could dress and go. Not to have gone might have been interpreted as a refusal in the end to wear Roumanian dress. We only stayed a short time at the ball as she was feeling so ill, and when the doctor came to see her next morning he pronounced her to be suffering from an acute attack of scarlet fever. Happily she did not contract a chill, which might have been extremely dangerous. That was the end of our festivities in Bucharest, as naturally I did not go out much for fear of carrying infection. It was very unfortunate and disagreeable for my wife to be laid up with such an attack in a noisy hotel, but there was no alternative, and happily she recovered without complications and was only just out of quarantine by the beginning of April when we went home together.

Queen Victoria had been greatly interested in the marriage of her granddaughter, and I was instructed by Sir H. Ponsonby to write full details direct to Her Majesty of everything that took place in connection with the Princess's reception. I wrote several times to the Queen and received Her Majesty's thanks and I only regret that I did not keep copies of my letters.

It was about Christmas time 1892 that I received a cypher telegram from Lord Rosebery offering me the post of Head of the Chancery in Paris, where Lord Dufferin was then Ambassador. I hesitated at first on account of the expense as I knew from friends in the Service the cost of living in Paris, and at that time our total income was only £1,200 a year. After consultation with Winifred for more than a whole day, we decided that I should take my chance and accept the post, trusting to luck for the future. I was glad afterwards of our decision when I found that Lord Dufferin had specially asked for my appointment to this vacancy on the staff, and that Lord Rosebery had also suggested my name for the post. After my acceptance I received a most charming letter from Lord Dufferin saying that he was willing to wait any number of months rather than lose me by the prolongation of my stay at Bucharest.

At the time of my departure from Roumania I was greatly pleased to hear from the Foreign Office that a large number of firms in Dundee had written to the Dundee Chamber of Commerce to express their appreciation of my services at Bucharest to British trade, ending up with the statement, "We can only regret the loss at Bucharest of one of the most energetic and successful Representatives our trade has yet had at that place." And yet

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politicians and others have endeavoured from time immemorial to make out that the Diplomatic Service paid no attention to British trade !

I received a most appreciative official letter from Lord Rosebery on relinquishing my post at Bucharest and was appointed to Paris on April 10th 1893.

On joining the Embassy in Paris I received a very warm welcome from Lord and Lady Dufferin and their family, with whom it was a great pleasure to me to be associated once more.

We soon found a charming flat in Paris *au cinquième* in a fine house in the Rue Pierre Charron with an uninterrupted view of the river, the Eiffel Tower, the Champ de Mars and the woods of Meudon beyond. It was in that flat in 1894 that my second boy was born and we spent a very happy three and a half years there. We had plenty of room with every comfort and convenience, and the rent was only £250 a year. It would now cost nearly three times that sum to get an apartment in Paris of that size. President Felix Faure's married daughter had also an apartment in that house and I often used to meet the President in the lift.

A few months after our arrival in Paris an incident occurred which had a very fortunate result for Winifred. Queen Victoria had heard from the Crown Princess of Roumania that she felt very lonely in Bucharest and needed the society of an English lady. When I met the Queen of Roumania a few years later she told me that the first years of her married life had been utterly wretched and miserable. Her Majesty had therefore proposed that I should be reappointed to Bucharest with the idea that Winifred should become Lady-in-Waiting to the Crown Princess. I need hardly say that I would never have consented. Queen Victoria happened to mention the matter to the Princess of Wales (Queen Alexandra), who was very indignant and said that rather than that this should happen she would appoint Winifred as her own lady-in-waiting. Consequently Winifred was at once appointed and this helped materially to make our financial position in Paris easier. It was of course a great joy to Winifred, who had known the Princess from her childhood owing to the Prince and Princess being frequent visitors at Crichel, and at the same time the fact of her holding that position at the Court at home was of great assistance from a social point of view abroad.

It was during our first summer in Paris in 1893 that Winifred and I were both invited and went to London to be present at the wedding in Buckingham Palace of the late King George and Queen Mary.

The work of the Embassy and the political situation at that time were of absorbing interest. The Dreyfus case, in which Dreyfus was charged with selling military information to Germany, was in full swing and French Society was torn by dissension between the Dreyfussards and the anti-Dreyfussards. Everybody suspected each other and the wildest rumours were current. The system of "espionage" was at its height and everybody was in a state of nervous excitement. Eventually Dreyfus was convicted and sentenced to penal servitude and he was publicly degraded in the presence of the garrison of Paris, the officer's stripes and buttons on his uniform being stripped from him and his sword broken. It was a tragic performance, and still more tragic when it is remembered that his trial and sentence were revised a few years later and he was brought back from the Devil's Island, where he had already served a sentence of several years, and reinstated in his former rank in the French Army. The German Military Attaché, Colonel Schwarzkopfen, always told me that Dreyfus was innocent, but that others in the Ministry of War were not ! It has since transpired, through the publication of Colonel Schwarzkopfen's memoirs, that it was Colonel Esterhazy, a member of the French General Staff, who was the culprit. What can his feelings have been over the Dreyfus tragedy !

It was also about that time that Colonel Marchand started on his famous expedition which ended in the waters of the Blue Nile, where he was met by General Kitchener, who successfully frustrated the object of his journey, but news had reached Lord Dufferin two years earlier of Colonel Marchand's intention and he had solemnly warned the Minister for Foreign Affairs (M. Hanotaux) and the Minister for the Colonies (M. Delcassé) of the dangerous feeling that such an expedition would create upon English public opinion. But our relations with France at that time were strained, and no notice was taken of the warning. Then again the tension between England and France was very great in regard to Siam, where France was adopting a policy of aggression and war was only averted by the coolness of the British Admiral, who disregarded the hostile attitude of the French Fleet when it passed the British ships with decks cleared for action on entering the Mekong River.

As I have said before, the work was very interesting. All the more so as Lord Dufferin left it entirely in my hands, he himself writing only one despatch about every quarter, giving a very full and most able account of the political situation in France. When he did write a despatch it was always

a masterpiece of literary style. On the few occasions that political work was slack I devoted my time and attention to various commercial and financial questions and wrote reports on such subjects as canal traffic in France, the French Budgets, divorce statistics, etc.

French Society presented extraordinary difficulties at that time, the Faubourg St. Germain absolutely declining to meet the Ministers or anybody holding an official position, while the Ministers themselves preferred not to meet the Faubourg. It must be admitted that the Ministers of those days were not as refined or cultivated as the French Ministers of to-day, though they may have been equally clever men, but all that class distinction between French Society and officials of the Government has now happily disappeared and French Ministers are to be met at the dinner-table of the most select and aristocratic members of the old French Society.

I always pitied Lord Dufferin, who had to give a series of official and also Society dinners in which class each was exclusive. My experience was that the official dinners were extraordinarily tiresome, whilst those to which the Faubourg was invited were delightful and very *chic*. There were some very pretty and attractive women at that time in French Society, including Countess Pourtalés, Madame Porges, Mrs. Standish and others, while some of the best-known men were equally charming and distinguished, such as General Gallifet, Prince de Sagan, Duc de Mouchy and many others. General Gallifet was as amusing as he was charming, and a great admirer of Mrs. Standish, who had an extraordinary resemblance to the Princess of Wales, which she cultivated by her clothes, coiffure, etc. It was always said that General Gallifet had a tin-plate on his stomach on account of a wound that would not heal.

Nobody has ever had a happier knack of receiving than Lord Dufferin and all his guests adored him. To his staff he was always perfectly charming and he never inquired whether the members of his staff were in Paris or enjoying themselves elsewhere, provided the work was satisfactorily done.

It was on the 28th June 1895 that I experienced one of the most pleasant surprises of my life. On opening a letter on my writing-table in the Chancery I found that it contained an offer from Lord Rosebery (then Prime Minister) of a C.B. couched in charming but simple words. I was enchanted at my good fortune, for although I was at that time rather senior in my grade, having completed fifteen years' service with pay of less than £400 a year, it was very exceptional for a Secretary in that grade to receive

so high an honour as the C.B., and I was the only instance at the time. Very naturally I thought that this honour was due to the intervention of Lord Dufferin on my behalf, but when I thanked him he told me in a most straightforward manner that he had had nothing to do with it, but that he rejoiced in my receiving it and blamed himself for not having himself taken the initiative in recommending me for it.

A few weeks later I was summoned to Osborne to be invested by the Queen with my Order. I have a lively recollection of it, as it was the only occasion that I ever had of talking to Queen Victoria. The moment she heard my name she asked me all about my family and referred to my grandfather whom she had known as Commander-in-Chief forty years before, and made inquiries as to other members of my family whom she had known. She impressed me as being very small, extremely gracious, and most dignified.

A year later, as I was sitting with Lord Rosebery in the Champs Élysées listening to his most interesting reminiscences of the Second Empire during his visits to Paris as quite a young man, I asked him why he had given me such a high decoration. He replied that he had wished two years earlier to mark his appreciation of my services at Bucharest, but at that time no C.B. was vacant. Had I then asked for a recognition of my work at Bucharest as, he said, so many do in such cases, some of whose names he quoted, he would not have refused my request but would have given me a lower distinction. As, however, I had not done so, he had decided to give me the C.B. as soon as a vacancy occurred in the Order. I need hardly say that though I have more than once refused the offer of a British Order for reasons which I regarded as sufficient, I have never asked for one, and it is difficult to imagine how anybody could have the brass to do so, though I knew such to be frequently the case.

I would like to place here on record my gratitude and indebtedness to Lord Rosebery for having dragged me out of the ruck of the junior branches of the Diplomatic Service by conferring upon me such an exceptional distinction as the C.B. at the age of 37, an irrefutable testimony to my past services. It gave me the forward impetus that I needed, though he had no further connection in any way with my career. Later I saw a good deal of Lord Rosebery, whom I liked and whose clear-headed views and ability I admired. Winifred and I stayed with him on several occasions both at Mentmore and Dalmeny. We were so far privileged when staying at Dalmeny that we were shown over Barnbougle Castle where he slept

every night alone without a single servant, and where he had a wonderful library and collection of Napoleonic relics, and when staying at Mentmore I was taken out more than once for an after-dinner drive in the dark in a carriage with postilion à la Daumont. He was always extraordinarily nice and kind to me and never ceased to take an interest in my career, and I have ever regarded Lord Rosebery as indirectly responsible for such advancements as I had.

During the three and a half years that I was in Paris there were no less than three Presidents of the Republic. It was in June 1894 that President Carnot was murdered when driving through a town that he was visiting officially. A young Italian sprang on the footstep of the landau in which the President was driving and pushed towards him what seemed to be a petition that he wished to present. The President did not move but what struck the onlookers as strange was that the petition remained apparently of itself at right angles to his body, and it was then noticed that the President was dead from a dagger that had pierced his heart. From that day onward the Presidential landaus have had no steps outside the carriage. I well remember the funeral on a blazing hot day at the beginning of July when the whole of the Corps Diplomatique had to be at the Élysée in full uniform at 9 a.m. and how we had to follow the procession for miles through Paris on foot to the Panthéon without luncheon or anything to drink and were only able to get back after four in the afternoon. It nearly finished off some of the more elderly members of the Corps Diplomatique.

President Carnot was succeeded by President Casimir Périer, but his appointment was not so popular with the Government of the day as he was of good family and was alleged to frequent Faubourg Society. He was certainly a charming man of much distinction. His Ministers made things so uncomfortable for him and thwarted him to such an extent that at the end of six months he resigned and retired into private life, from which he never emerged. He was succeeded by M. Felix Faure, a wealthy merchant from Havre or Cherbourg with the appearance of a prosperous grocer, and a very ordinary person. His life was not one of much dignity and he lived only four years of his Presidency.

During the same period of three and a half years, the two remaining French Marshals of the Second Empire died. These were Marshal Macmahon and Marshal Canrobert. The funeral ceremony was in each case one of unequalled military splendour and very remarkable to witness.

LORD DUFFERIN

My service in Paris terminated simultaneously with that of Lord Dufferin, who retired in 1896, having reached or even surpassed the age limit, and I was very glad that it should be so, as I was very devoted to him and would not have relished serving under a new Ambassador.

CHAPTER VI

TEHRAN, 1896-1898

IT was during the summer of 1896 that Sir Eric Barrington, Lord Salisbury's Private Secretary, told me that he was looking for a suitable person to go to Tehran as First Secretary, and added that of course I would not go if the post was offered to me. I told him that I was not so sure, but that if he made me a firm offer of promotion to that post I would give him my reply within twenty-four hours. He did so in writing, and after consulting Winifred I decided to accept the post. Barrington was greatly surprised.

On the whole I was sorry to leave Paris, where we had been very happy and where, in spite of the smallness of our means, we had been able to go out a great deal in French Society and to entertain in a modest manner. We even entertained King Edward and Queen Alexandra, and also King George and Queen Mary on different occasions when they visited Paris. and we saw a great deal of our English friends. Still, it was time to be moving on, as after sixteen and a half years as a Junior Secretary, my position in the Service, owing to the slowness of promotion, was not very satisfactory, and there was no chance of being selected for promotion so long as one was a Second Secretary. I and everybody else little thought then that in seven and a half years I would be Ambassador in St. Petersburg.

Although as a married man with two small children it was a serious undertaking to accept so distant and inaccessible a post as Tehran, I was convinced I was doing right. King Edward (then Prince of Wales) wrote to me from Homburg that he was glad to hear that I was going to so important a post. Lord Rosebery wrote: "I think you are quite right. I look forward to your getting to the top of the tree . . ." while Lord Dufferin wrote, "I am sure you did right to accept it." Winifred informed Queen Alexandra (then Princess of Wales) and offered to resign her post as Lady-in-Waiting, but H.R.H. replied by telegram, "Too sorry to

JOURNEY TO TEHRAN

hear about Persian appointment, but will not give up my Bena ; will wait return."

In those days the journey to Tehran was one of considerable difficulty. The shortest route was via Batoum and Baku across the Caspian Sea to Enzeli and Resht, and from Resht to Tehran a distance of about 220 miles over a mountain-pass of the Elburz range, 120 miles on horseback by relays (what was called *chapar*), and the remainder of the journey in broken-down carriages with four ponies harnessed abreast on one of the worst roads in the world. In view of the difficulties of the journey and the uncertainty of the climate, Winifred and I decided that the children should remain at home, that I should go out first to Tehran in the late autumn to get things ready for her and that she should rejoin me in the spring. Accordingly I left England in the middle of November and reached Tehran about a month later.

I went by Messageries Maritimes from Marseilles to Constantinople and arrived there almost immediately after a massacre of Armenians by the Turks, and heard stories on every side how they had been slaughtered like sheep without making any resistance whatever. From Constantinople I went by sea to Batoum, crossed the Caucasus by rail passing through Tiflis and reached Baku. For hours before reaching Baku the air seemed saturated with the smell of petroleum and at Baku everything was black and oily. I stayed there for two or three days waiting for the Caspian steamer to start, and I well remember the curious and motley company at the hotel composed of adventurers from every quarter of the globe trying to make fortunes by speculation in oil. My journey across the Caspian was a severe trial. The weather was very bad, and the Caspian Sea being very shallow the sea was very rough. The ship was small and rolled horribly. We were two days getting to Enzeli, where we arrived at 5 a.m. one morning, but as there was no harbour then, not even a breakwater, it was impossible to land owing to the heavy sea, and the ship's head was turned round to Baku. I was exasperated. The following day we anchored at midday in a small port on the shores of the Caspian and I soon found out that there was a cargo steamer in harbour bound for Enzeli. I transferred myself, my servant and luggage immediately to the steamer. There was only one cabin in the ship and this was occupied by the Captain and his wife, but on the deck there was a small Russian brougham, so I ensconced myself quite comfortably in the brougham, and reached Enzeli at last by sea in a brougham ! Boats came to fetch me off at once and I only just succeeded in disembarking in time, since an hour later it was blowing so hard that disembarkation would

have been impossible. Thus I narrowly escaped having again to return towards Baku.

From Enzeli I went to Resht across the lagoon and stayed at the Consulate. The following day I started riding to Tehran with my servant and a Legation Gholam or guard. The journey took four days. I remember that my saddlebags were bulging with coin, silver pieces the size of florins and worth about fivepence and I was astonished at first but amused later to see my Gholam throwing handfuls to the people wherever we stopped. Never shall I forget the filthy rest-houses, crawling with vermin, where we had to spend each night, nor have I ever seen such roads which were really in some places no roads at all but only mule tracks. Still it was all new, the weather in December was delightful and I enjoyed it. It was about the middle of December that I reached Tehran. On approaching the town from the desert nothing is to be seen except high mud walls, and after passing through the City Gate one traversed long streets of mud walls with doors but hardly any windows. The streets were not paved and were full of deep holes. But suddenly on passing through the front Gate of the Legation compound one found oneself in the midst of green trees, lawns and running streams. It was fairyland after the expanse of stony desert reaching from the foot of the mountains to Tehran. As First Secretary I had a nice little house in the compound, where I camped for two months till the Minister, Sir M. Durand, went home on leave, when I transferred my quarters to the Legation Building. I have a pleasant recollection of having shot a woodcock from the window of my little house.

Sir M. Durand belonged to the Indian Civil Service and had held the post of Foreign Secretary in India. His appointment as Minister in Tehran was a mistake as the Persians particularly dislike Anglo-Indian officials, chiefly because they fear that it might be thought that they were Indians, and they resented such a suggestion. It is largely a question of "amour propre". He was very stiff in his manner towards the Persians, and I found after a short time that they disliked him because of his unbending manner, his unusual reticence and the bad Persian that he spoke and which they termed "Afghani". His wife was a perpetual invalid. Sir M. was a very idle man. He spent the whole morning in his bath reading French novels and never appeared till luncheon-time. The afternoon was spent in polo or some other amusement. Very little work was done except in the Chancery, where it was heavy. I cannot say that I found him attractive, but I recognized his literary ability.

Mouzafter-ed-Din was Shah of Persia. He succeeded his father Nasr-ed-Din Shah, who was assassinated on 1st May, 1896. His predecessor was not buried till six months later, when the ceremony took place with great pomp and ceremonial. I was told by those present that the corpse was conveyed on a very high funeral car and was "high" in more ways than one. Mouzafter-ed-Din was a weak, well-meaning ruler, but frightfully corrupt. No appointment was filled without his receiving payment, and both the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs complained to me that, when they had been warned that the Shah intended to do them the honour of paying them a visit at their private houses, the visit would cost each of them a very large sum of money which they would have to present to the Shah on his departure. I myself have been present at a review of troops, at the conclusion of which all the Commanders of regiments and batteries were summoned to the Shah, who addressed a few words to them and then himself received small bags of gold from each Colonel or Commander. Of course this gold came out of the money provided for the rations and maintenance of the troops.

The Prime Minister, Amin-ed-Dowleh, was an agreeable but incompetent man, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs was Mohsin Khan, formerly Ambassador at Constantinople and known by the title of Mushir-ed-Dowleh. I had known him well as Persian Ambassador at Constantinople, where we had always been good friends, and I think he had a weakness for me. I had often to speak to him very severely, and a day or two before I left Tehran, he said to me, "Nobody has ever said such hard things to me as you have, but all the same I love you just as if you were my own son." I believe it was true, but I felt it was unnecessary that on my departure he should embrace me as his son! I was really fond of him and he was extremely witty and amusing, but quite unscrupulous and very untruthful. I think it was on account of his wit and lack of scruple that I liked him so much, and because I knew that he always did what he could to help me, provided my wishes did not clash with the interests of his pocket. What I always enjoyed with the Persians of all classes was their wonderful sense of humour, and the knowledge that a friendly joke would ease the most difficult situation. The more improper the joke the better they were pleased.

The Shah had another Minister, the Hakim-al-Mulk, his Persian doctor, who was very useful to me in conveying messages and my views to the Shah, a task which he shared with Sir Hugh Adcock, the Shah's European

doctor, who was also of great assistance to me in approaching the Shah without doing so through the channel of the Minister for Foreign Affairs. My relations with the Shah could not have been better, but the opportunities for seeing him were rare.

During these years politics in Persia were generally confined to a struggle for supremacy between the British and Russian Legations. A few days after Sir Mortimer's departure on leave, the Russians, on a flimsy pretext of alarm for the health of their subjects in their own territory, sent a considerable body of troops across the frontier into north-eastern Persia to establish a sanitary cordon against Afghanistan. The Persian Government with my support made a very vigorous protest, which had but little effect until I announced that with the consent of the Persian Government the Government of India would send troops to form a sanitary cordon to the north of Seistan. The object of the Russians was to penetrate as far south as Seistan in order to be able to turn the flank of the frontiers of India, but when the Indian troops arrived and the Russians found that they had been foiled, they soon decamped and their example was followed by the Indian troops. I was congratulated by Lord Salisbury on my prompt success.

English interests were naturally concentrated in southern Persia, and it was practically useless to try to compete commercially with Russia in the north owing to the frontiers of Russia and Persia being coterminous and to the facility of intercommunication, while British trade could only penetrate from the south over impossible roads and difficult mountain-passes. My only instructions on leaving for Persia were to do all I could to push forward the construction of the Bakhtiari road from Ahwaz to Ispahan, in which the firm of Messrs. Lynch was deeply interested owing to their having navigation rights and facilities on the Karun river and to the advantages which such a route would present not merely for their own trade but for British trade in general. It was not easy to negotiate an agreement between Messrs. Lynch and the Bakhtiari chiefs owing to the suspicious character of the latter and their dislike of any foreign interference or control over the proposed road which was to pass through their territory. I was soon on very friendly terms with the Bakhtiari chiefs who resided in Tehran and represented their tribe (in reality they were hostages), and after nearly a year of tedious negotiations, which on more than one occasion nearly fell through owing to the exigency of one or other party to the transaction, I signed for Messrs. Lynch an agreement with the chiefs. The road was made and opened to traffic two or three years later, but I do not

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know what its actual situation may be at the present time. Much would naturally depend upon the security of the road, its upkeep and the amount of tolls levied for its use.

Two disturbing incidents occurred in the South during my term of office at Tehran ; the murder of an Englishman, Mr. Graves, by Beluchis near Rapsch in southern Persia, necessitating a punitive expedition in which a contingent from the British squadron in the Persian Gulf took part ; and secondly, the increased importation of arms at ports in the Persian Gulf, these arms finding their way eventually to the tribesmen on the Indian frontier. The Persian Government behaved quite well over this matter and I was able to make an agreement with them by which British ships could search for and seize arms found on ships within Persian territorial waters, the arms being destroyed or handed over to the Persian Government. Several British ships and dhows were caught smuggling large cargoes of arms which were duly confiscated and handed over to the Persian Government, who hoped in this way to rearm their army.

The only other incident in the South was the murder of the Sheikh of Mohammerah by his brother, who succeeded him. No general disturbance followed as, at the request of the Shah, I sent a British ship to maintain order. Twenty years later, when Viceroy of India, I met the Sheikh at Mohammerah and could hardly realize that such a courtly old gentleman could have been the direct instigator of the murder of his brother.

In Tehran the Russians with some skill organized a run on the Imperial Bank of Persia, which was the principal British institution in Persia and served as a means of extending British influence and prestige. The attempt to break the bank was very nearly successful, not because there was no gold in the Bank, but because it was in gold ingots ! I was very angry with the Manager, Mr. Rabino, over this matter, as the results to British prestige might have been disastrous if the Bank had had to close its doors.

Before I left Persia I concluded an agreement with the Persian Government by which they obtained a small loan through the Bank of Persia, and as guarantee for the loan control of the Customs of the South was handed over to representatives of the Bank. This was an immense advantage to British commerce in the South as it placed a check on corruption, and until the loan was repaid British trade held a very privileged position.

When I had been some weeks in Tehran I heard for the first time of a new Order which was called " The Wolff Medal ". It had two classes, consisting of a gold or silver star, according to class, with a pretty red and

blue riband. It had apparently been invented by Sir Henry Drummond Wolff when Minister in Persia and was distributed by him and his successor, Sir M. Durand, in recognition of services rendered by Persians to the Legation. The Foreign Office, I found, had no knowledge of the existence of this so-called Order. There were Persian Ministers in possession of it, as well as officials and employees, and I must plead guilty of having given a second-class medal to a Gholam for meritorious service during the period that I was in charge of the Legation. I heard no more of the medal till 1902, when I was Assistant Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, and the Persian Minister of War came to England, and as I knew that he was the proud possessor of a Medal of the First Class, I thought it wise to warn King Edward in case he should notice it amongst the decorations worn by the War Minister. The King was greatly surprised when he heard of this fictitious Order, but took it very well and merely told me to send the strictest orders to Tehran that no more were to be given. I saw the War Minister wearing the medal officially, but the King after closely scrutinizing it, very tactfully said nothing.

Life on the whole in Tehran was very pleasant, provided that not too much was expected from a social point of view. In the Legation we were a happy family and all the staff lunched and dined with us every day. It is interesting to note that my two Secretaries both became Ambassadors in later years, viz., Sir Horace Rumbold and Sir Ronald Graham. Although generally we had as much work as it was possible to cope with, we managed to find time to play tennis and polo, and occasionally made week-end expeditions to course hares, shoot duck, etc. I had special permission to shoot in the Shah's preserves in the mountains about twenty miles away and I got some good heads of ibex. When the weather was hot in the summer we went to a place called Lar in the Elburz mountains, and camped in tents in a green valley surrounded by mountains full of ibex and with a good trout stream running within a hundred yards of our camp. By an arrangement of daily messengers we managed for six weeks to carry on the work of the Legation and to have wonderful shooting and fishing at the same time. It was a glorious time.

We also had a race meeting of two days which was great fun and a very popular function both with Europeans and Persians. The entries to the races were numerous and horses and ponies of quite a high standard. The jockeys were members of the British and foreign Legations and Colonies and rode in colours except in the polo pony scurries. I rode one of my

ponies in a scurry and came in first and was much amused by Persians coming up to congratulate me and saying "Of course the Chargé d'Affaires won!" implying that nobody else tried to win. That pony was a wonder and won several other races. I bought him out of a lot of about thirty pack ponies bringing wood to the Legation, and the price was £7.

The Persian mentality always amused me, but was quite incomprehensible. They are a very cultivated and artistic race, and just like children. They take nothing seriously, and money, of which they have very little, seems their only preoccupation, perhaps because they have so little. They like to be thought European but have no idea of European civilization. Their women who walk out of doors dressed in long black cloaks, their faces covered by white cotton material with slits for their eyes, wear European ballet dancers' dresses with bare legs at home in the harem. This they regard as ultra-European, and the fashion was introduced by Nasr-ed-Din Shah on his return from a visit to London. After all, Persian civilization has advanced less than that of almost any other country, and the Persian of to-day is still the same as the famous "Hadji Baba of Ispahan" described by Morier. I remember a delightful little story. One of my Secretaries kept chickens and was disgusted at having a bad egg for breakfast. He realized that his servant was selling his good eggs and substituting cheap eggs in their place. He threatened to beat him, but was quite disarmed and convulsed with laughter when his servant excused himself by saying, "The Sahib's chickens are very old and only lay stale eggs!"

It was towards the end of March 1898 that Sir M. Durand returned to Tehran, and having obtained permission to go home on leave I left two days after his return. We were sorry in one sense to leave our Tehran friends, who were a cheerful lot and most friendly, but we were delighted to start homewards after our long separation from our children. Everybody came to see us off and there was a formal leave-taking and stirrup-cup on the road about five miles outside the town. The journey was almost more difficult than when we came out, owing to the melting of the snow in the mountains and the flooded and muddy roads in the valleys. In one valley our horses had to wade for more than a mile, and just as we reached terra firma we looked round and saw the mule that was carrying two trunks containing my wife's dresses, etc., quietly lie down in the water and begin to roll. I jumped off my horse, dashed into the water and pulled the brute up and out, but alas! most of the clothes were ruined. Again we traversed the Caspian, the Caucasus and the Black Sea, and finally took train from

Odessa to Vienna, where we stayed and rested at the Embassy of Sir Horace Rumbold, father of the Secretary, who had been with us at Tehran. From Vienna we went to Paris, where I left Winifred in the house of Baroness Hirsch to make good her wardrobe, and went on home to see my children, whom I had not seen for eighteen months and who came to meet me on the pier at Folkestone. They told me afterwards that they had expected to see somebody much bigger than I was !

On leaving Tehran the British firms in Persia sent home very flattering accounts of what I had done for their interests during the time I had been in charge of the Legation, one firm going so far as to say that the success which I had "achieved in little more than a year in dealing with claims of British merchants in Persia equalled the total results accomplished on their behalf by the British Legation during the previous fifteen years." I received also an official despatch from Lord Salisbury expressing his entire approval of the manner in which I had conducted the business of the Legation during the period I had been in charge. When I saw Lord Salisbury at the Foreign Office on my return he asked me whether I had not sometimes been afraid of the responsibilities I had assumed on my own initiative, to which I replied that I had undoubtedly passed through moments of some anxiety. He remarked that it had all turned out very well, but that it might have been awkward if it had not. I agreed.

Barely two months after my return to England I was, to my great surprise, offered promotion by Lord Salisbury to the post of Secretary of Embassy, or Councillor, in the Embassy at St. Petersburg, thus passing over the heads of seventeen of my seniors in the Service. There never was anything more unexpected by me, but I was overjoyed at getting promotion and accepted the offer with enthusiasm. It created considerable stir and questions were asked in Parliament as to why I had passed over the heads of so many senior diplomatists, but Lord Salisbury was always quite firm in his statement that I was, in his opinion, the best suited to succeed Mr. Goschen, who had been appointed Minister in Belgrade from St. Petersburg.

CHAPTER VII

ST. PETERSBURG, 1898-1903

IN October 1898 I went to St. Petersburg and my wife followed me a little later when I had found and furnished an apartment. This was not a very easy task, but I eventually found a moderately good flat at a rental of £550 a year, unfurnished, the house allowance given by the Foreign Office being £150 a year and my pay £900 a year. We soon made ourselves very comfortable and brought out our two boys, who loved St. Petersburg and throve in the cold. I thought the climate horrible, there being snow for eight months in the year and real warmth for barely one month. Still, we enjoyed being at St. Petersburg in spite of the climate and the very ruinous cost of living.

Sir Charles Scott was Ambassador. I had known him in Berlin where he was Secretary of Embassy when I was there as a Third Secretary. He had a charming and pretty wife and five daughters. He was always very kind, and though popular in Russian Society was not a political success. He had spent most of his career in small German Courts, and in Denmark as Minister, and was inexperienced in dealing with the larger political questions of Europe. Consequently he found himself out of his depth in St. Petersburg and his views carried no weight at the Foreign Office.

In going to St. Petersburg my wife and I had the great advantage of having known the Emperor of Russia and seen him several times in England when he was, *Cesarevitch*, and the fact that Winifred was a member of the English Court made things easy from a social point of view.

Count Mouravieff was Minister for Foreign Affairs, a pleasant man who spoke English well, but was very Anglophobe and hopelessly untruthful. My relations with him were always friendly, but they were not of long duration as within little more than a year of my arrival he was found dead in his study at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs with a big bruise on his forehead which he was supposed to have received by falling in a faint and

striking his head on the corner of the table. I have sometimes wondered whether this story was true. He had as Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs, Count Lamsdorff, who succeeded him.

Count Lamsdorff and I had always the most friendly relations stretching over a period of eight years and I had great respect for him. He was a strange-looking man, very short, very pale and very bald. He wore very high-heeled shoes to increase his height. Like all Russians, he was slippery in his dealings, but always courteous, and he knew his business, which could not be said of his predecessor.

The political atmosphere during the following five years was anything but pleasant. It was a perpetual struggle on the part of Great Britain to resist the aggressive and ambitious policy of Russia in Turkey, Persia, China and the East. Great Britain was very much handicapped in the first place by the smallness of her military resources, which made aggression in Asia appear easy to Russia, and secondly, the outbreak of war with the Transvaal in October 1899, when the power of England was crippled in Europe by the supreme effort necessitated to achieve victory in South Africa after the initial reverses experienced at Colenso, Spion Kop and Ladysmith.

In Persia, where the tension between England and Russia was the greatest, the policy of Russia was quite clear. It aimed at the political and economic domination of the north of Persia and the acquisition of a port in the Persian Gulf by pressure towards the south. The Russian Government were greatly disturbed at Germany obtaining from Turkey the Bagdad Railway Concession, and German competition and domination in Asia Minor and Mesopotamia were already regarded as a serious danger, to which the only possible counterpoise was a Russian port in the Persian Gulf connected by Russian railways with the Russian frontier. The line advocated was a line from the north connected with Tehran and Meshed, with a southern prolongation along the Afghan frontier to Bunder Abbas and Charbar, thus outflanking Afghanistan and the British Indian frontier. No secret was made of these schemes, which were openly discussed in the Russian Press. To the Russians, Persia was merely a gate through which they wished to pass in order to obtain the key to the door which we held in the Persian Gulf. They scorned the idea at that time of the demarcation of British and Russian spheres of influence in Persia, they aspired to the whole. Although Russia was in dire straits for money, the Russian Government declined to consider any scheme for an Anglo-Russian loan to Persia but made a loan to Persia secured on the Customs of the North, with rights

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of eventual railway construction in northern Persia, the money for such projects not then being available.

It was only eight years later, after the Russian armies and fleet had experienced disastrous reverses at the hands of Japan, that the Russian Government were sufficiently conciliatory in disposition to discuss and accept spheres of influence in Persia.

In the Far East the Russians already had possession of Port Arthur and were in occupation of the greater part of Manchuria, but their aim was to obtain the domination of northern China and the subjugation of Corea. With this object in view, they were casting their eyes on the island of Kogador, the best harbour on the Corean coast. These aggressive tendencies had already excited the suspicion and distrust of Japan and were the beginning of that Russo-Japanese rivalry in Corea which five years later precipitated the Russo-Japanese War. Even in 1899 the question of war with Russia before the completion of the Trans-Siberian Railway was being seriously discussed in Japan, and the Russian Government, knowing that the Japanese naval programme would be completed in 1900, became alarmed and sent M. Isvolsky, who was regarded as their best diplomatist, to Tokio in order to keep the peace if possible for a few more years till the railway was completed and Russia more prepared for the struggle which they knew must come, but which they wished to delay for a time. In this they were successful.

In Central Asia, where General Kourapatkin was in command of the Russian troops, the policy was to put pressure upon Great Britain by constantly menacing Afghanistan and India so as to be able to secure the aims of Russian policy elsewhere. The objective was openly declared to be the partition of Afghanistan by the advance of Russia to the Hindu Kush range of mountains, which was to be the frontier between Russia and India. To achieve this object the construction of the purely military railway from Orenburg to Tashkent was undertaken, the military posts on the Russo-Afghan frontier were strengthened and the penetration of Kashgar and the Pamirs was hastened. Every opportunity was seized to create incidents with the Afghans and to annoy Great Britain by sending unofficial missions into Afghanistan and elsewhere where British interests predominated, and by a complete disregard of all agreements made in the past.

In the Near East of Europe the policy of Russia was to endeavour to dominate the Sultan of Turkey and to obtain a free exit to the Mediterranean through the Straits of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, while denying the same

liberty of passage to the ships of all other Powers. In this they never succeeded owing to the astuteness of the Sultan Abdul Hamid, who fully realized that his own safety rested in maintaining the European Treaties by which the closure of the Straits was secured.

To meet this aggressive policy on the part of Russia, Great Britain had only her fleet to maintain the *status quo* on the sea, and diplomacy with which to resist it on land. But the Boer War which broke out on the 11th October 1899 presented what the Russians felt to be a propitious moment to aggravate their insidious policy of aggression against that country which had from the time of the Crimean War proved itself to be the real stumbling-block to the realization by Russia of her most ambitious schemes. Then was the moment and Count Mouravieff was the man.

It was only a few days after the declaration of war that Count Mouravieff, who was abroad on a holiday, went to Madrid and endeavoured to commence the creation of a hostile combination of the Powers against Great Britain. He had a long conversation with Señor Silvela, the Prime Minister of Spain, in which, by implying that Germany would also co-operate, he pressed Spain to adopt a hostile attitude towards Great Britain and to join with Russia and Germany against us. Baits were held out to Spain of Gibraltar and Morocco in the event of Great Britain being crushed, but without success. Unfortunately for Count Mouravieff, M. Silvela informed the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires of all that had passed, and a record of the conversation was sent to the Austrian Embassy in St. Petersburg and was shown to me by Prince Kinsky, the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires, one of my oldest and greatest friends. Not satisfied with his efforts at Madrid, Count Mouravieff went to Paris and there tried to get the French Government to adopt a hostile attitude towards England in connection with the Boer War, but the French Government was friendly, though the French Press was odious. Thus Mouravieff's first attempt to create a "block" of Powers who would act together in a sense hostile to England resulted in complete failure, but the one great advantage to us was that his hostility was unmasked. The Russian Government did, however, all they could to increase the difficulties of the position of Great Britain during those first few months of the war when the British arms met with serious reverses. With a view to preventing British troops being despatched from India to South Africa a large armed camp was formed at Kushk on the Afghan frontier and a considerable movement of troops was made to that post. In order to annoy us, a Russian Military Attaché was sent

to the Boer Headquarters. The officer in question was a Colonel Gourko of sinister reputation. His brother was imprisoned at Monte Carlo for having robbed and assaulted another Russian and Colonel Gourko obtained access to his brother in prison and gave him poison with which to kill himself. It was reported later that Colonel Gourko's attitude towards British troops and prisoners in South Africa was the reverse of diplomatic or soldierly.

A further act of hostility by Count Mouraviëff towards Great Britain was the despatch of a memorandum dated February 6th, 1900, notifying H.M. Government that the former agreements, by which all communications between the Russian and Afghan Governments except on purely local frontier questions had to pass through His Majesty's Government, could no longer be regarded as binding, and that the relations existing between Russia and Afghanistan imposed the necessity of direct communications. This was a most unfriendly act at a moment when Great Britain was engaged in a death struggle in South Africa with the Boers. It should have been fought out at once with the Russian Government, but unfortunately for various reasons nothing was done, though I have the satisfaction of feeling that I urged immediate action but was overruled. The obvious sequel to this inaction was the despatch in October 1902 of a letter from Colonel Ignatieff, a Russian agent on the frontier of Afghanistan, to the Ameer. When news of this letter reached H.M. Government a strong protest was made at St. Petersburg. The Russian argument in reply was that the necessity of direct relations with Afghanistan having been notified to H.M. Government in February 1900, Colonel Ignatieff was free to act accordingly, whether H.M. Government assented or dissented. There was a long correspondence on this subject between the Embassy and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, but without success. It may be asked what chance there could be of success since our diplomatic representations could have no material support.

These are examples of some of Count Mouraviëff's hostile action towards us at a moment when he thought we could be squeezed, but as history has proved, they had insignificant results. I confess I had no feeling of regret when I heard the news a few months later that he had retired from the diplomatic to another world, where perhaps he may continue his intrigues but equally without result. His successor, Count Lamsdorff, was a timid man, and though at first somewhat unfriendly towards England, chiefly, I believe, owing to his fear of the military party, he never took any

unfriendly action towards us, and later on, under the influence of the Emperor and of his real desire for peace, he became a friend upon whom one could generally rely for a peaceful solution to all questions at issue.

After the outbreak of the Boer War, the hostility displayed by the Russian Press and by Russian Society in St. Petersburg towards England was quite phenomenal. I had never seen anything like it. All classes seemed to grudge and belittle our successes and to rejoice over our reverses. I had never disguised from myself the fact that the military and official classes hated us, but there had always been a tradition that the Imperial family with few exceptions and the upper stratum of Society were more favourably disposed towards England. This proved a complete delusion, the Grand Dukes being without exception pro-Boer, and the only supporters of England in the Imperial family were the Emperor and Empress. But for that fact the situation might have become much more difficult than it really was. As a matter of fact, this anti-British feeling was fairly general all over Europe, but it was very satisfactory to hear from the Austrian Ambassador (Baron d'Aehrenthal), when he returned from leave, that the Emperor of Austria in referring to the Boer War had expressed the hope that the British would soon inflict a crushing defeat upon the Boers, with whom he could have no sympathy whatever.

Tchirsky, later Ambassador in Vienna at the outbreak of the 1914 War and of sinister influence at the time, was then Councillor of the German Embassy, and I well remember his unconcealed joy at our reverses in South Africa and his urgent advice to make peace with the Boers on any terms obtainable. I told him roughly that I scorned his advice, for which I had not asked, and foretold that in three months the British Army would be in Pretoria. And I was right !

Later published correspondence shows that Tchirsky's view was only the reflex of the views held by the Kaiser, who, in a letter to the Prince of Wales dated February 1900, urged that in view of " the present position of the war " . . . " it would certainly be better to bring matters to a settlement." He added : " Even the best football club, if it is beaten notwithstanding the most gallant defence, accepts finally its defeat with equanimity. Last year in the great cricket match of England v. Australia, the former took the victory of the latter quietly, with chivalrous acknowledgment of her opponent." It is unnecessary to add that the Prince of Wales sent an appropriate reply to the effect that the conflict with the Boers could not be likened to defeat by the Australians in cricket matches since

England was fighting for the very existence of the Empire. And yet the Kaiser in his letters to the Queen posed as the friend of this country !

During that winter of 1899 I was frequently invited by the Grand Duke Vladimir, who was always most friendly, to shoot with him and other Grand Dukes and people connected with the Court and Society. During the whole of those days the Transvaal war was an inexhaustible topic of conversation when I was not present in a group, and hopes for our defeat by the Boers were generally expressed. Of course, nothing was ever said before me, but I knew from neutral friends.

In the meantime, in 1900 the Boxer movement took place in China, culminating in the siege of the Legations in Peking. International forces were sent to relieve the besieged Legations and the troops employed were placed under the orders of General Count Von Waldersee, the nominee of the German Emperor. This created a good deal of feeling in Russia owing to the preponderance of the Russian forces in China and was the beginning of trouble between Russians and Germans. The Russian Press sank even to the depth of rejoicing over a temporary defeat of the German forces by the Boxers. The Legations were in the end relieved, but the tension between Germany and Russia became more marked. The Russian troops throughout their campaign in Manchuria and the operations round Peking, behaved with the greatest barbarity and massacred the Chinese inhabitants wholesale. These incidents were rightly exposed in the British Press and naturally did not add to the friendliness of Anglo-Russian relations. The Russians, much to the annoyance of General Count Waldersee, withdrew by the Emperor's orders the bulk of their troops from Peking, wishing to secure thereby a peaceful solution of the Manchurian question, where they were anxious to maintain their military position and hoping to make the Chinese believe that by their withdrawal from Peking they were the one and only friend of China. In order also to maintain the fiction that the Russian troops were to be withdrawn from Manchuria, a force of railway guards was created to protect the Russian railways in China. These were simply regular Russian troops bearing a distinguishing mark of a Chinese dragon on their uniforms and nominally under the control of the Minister of Finance, M. Witte. They were nicknamed "Mathilda's guards", Mathilda being the *petit nom* of Madame Witte, a lady of acknowledged notoriety in the past.

Another source of annoyance to the Russians was the fact of an agreement being concluded between England and Germany relating to railways in

the province of Shantung without a word being said to the Russian Government. A good deal of ill-feeling was created by this omission.

I have already referred to the hostility of the Russian Press, which was absolutely unbridled and without restraint in their misstatements as regards British policy in South Africa and the conduct of our troops there. We did not complain, as on other occasions the invariable answer to such complaints was that the Government controlled the Press in matters of internal affairs, but allowed them a free hand to deal with foreign affairs. A word, however, from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs was always sufficient to moderate the tone of the Press if Germany, after a press campaign against her, moved a few regiments to the frontiers of Russia. Nevertheless, the Russian Government complained to me and in London of the publication in the English Press of details of the massacres of Chinese by Russian troops in China, and did not seem to grasp the weakness of their position in doing so. It was only a few weeks later that Count Lamsdorff complained to my friend Prince Kinsky that the licence given to the Press to abuse England as much as possible as regards the Boer War was proving a double-edged sword since he himself was being attacked for his policy in connection with the war.

Witte, the Minister of Finance, was undoubtedly the outstanding figure in the Russian Government at that time. He was a strong, clever and unscrupulous man of great ambition. His manners were abrupt and wanting in polish, but his views were clear and decided. While Count Mouravieff had been pursuing a policy of pinpricks and hostility towards Great Britain which, if not brought to a close by his death, might have created a serious state of tension between Great Britain and Russia, M. Witte was greatly preoccupied with the finances of Russia and strongly advocated a policy of peace owing to the heavy expenditure incurred by Russia in her Manchurian policy in the Far East. In this he received the support of the Emperor and Lamsdorff when the latter became Minister for Foreign Affairs. Russian finance was in such a bad state that no money was available for an adventurous policy and M. Witte, in spite of faked budget surpluses, failed to raise the loans he wanted in Berlin, Paris and America. In consequence, all civil expenditure was ruthlessly cut down and no credits given for internal reform and developments.

But in a secret report sent by M. Witte to the Emperor in August 1900 the real aims of Russia stood revealed. His view was that in order to maintain Russia's position in the forefront of the European Powers it was

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necessary to continue heavy expenditure on the Army, Navy and railways and at the same time to practise the most rigid economy in all other Departments of the State with the view of building up an enormous reserve fund so that Russia should be amply provided with funds to meet any emergency that might arise. With that object in view, all possible complications were to be avoided so that Russia might gather strength, and in a few years' time, when political questions might arise in which Russian interests were involved, she might be in a position, backed by irresistible force, to solve them in accordance with Russian aspirations. That was M. Witte's policy in 1900 and 1901 and there is little doubt that had he had control over events in the Far East there would have been no war with Japan, at least until a later date. In the meantime, the need of funds hampered M. Witte greatly, and their absence tended more than anything else to moderate the attitude of the Russians in China.

It was in the month of November 1901 that an event of very far-reaching importance occurred. A little Japanese man, that very able and remarkable statesman Marquis Ito, arrived unobtrusively and unexpectedly in St. Petersburg. He was charged with a mission from his Government to negotiate a Treaty with the Russian Government by which Japan was to secure a free hand in Corea and Russia a free hand in Manchuria. After two or three weeks of fruitless negotiations, since in spite of Count Lamsdorff's support of the proposal the Emperor and the Russian Government refused absolutely to permit any concession to Japan in Corea, which they hoped themselves to dominate, Marquis Ito left St. Petersburg for Berlin. It was through the indiscretion of a high official of the Russian Ministry for Foreign Affairs that I learnt of Marquis Ito's mission and its failure, and I immediately informed Lord Lansdowne fully of the facts. A message was promptly sent to Marquis Ito in Berlin inviting him to come to London, an invitation which he readily accepted. This was, I believe, the most crucial moment in the national history of Russia. Had the Russian Government been able to foresee the future and to appreciate the relentless tenacity of Japanese policy and the efficiency of Japanese strategy, how gladly they would have accepted the terms then proposed by the Japanese Government. The Russian Government must have had some vague intuition of the mistake they were making, as when Marquis Ito arrived in Berlin he received a telegram begging him to return to St. Petersburg. He, being a proud man, declined and went to London. A few weeks later the first Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Alliance of January 1902 was concluded. This Treaty

created a great stir in Russia and in Europe generally. On the day of its publication I, with another Secretary, happened to be invited to play tennis with the Grand Duke Vladimir, and the moment he came into the court he called out in quite a friendly way: "Messieurs les Anglais, je vous salue! C'est un coup de maître!"

Many people at that time thought that the British Government had achieved a wonderful stroke of policy, but although I do not wish in any way to depreciate the great value that the Japanese Alliance was to us then and for years afterwards, the cleverness to my mind was on the side of the Japanese, since it secured for Japan the opportunity of dealing single-handed with Russia without the possibility of the intervention of any other Power, and thanks to the overwhelming force of the British Navy, without any risk of the invasion of their island Empire. From that day forward the master minds of Japan pursued their preparations with relentless activity until the beginning of the year 1904, when the last new Japanese battleship had left the English dockyards and Japan was ready for war. The moment for negotiation with Russia and for this rupture of relations was chosen by the Japanese statesmen. The first blow was struck by Japan and the war was carried on successfully until peace was concluded at Portsmouth, the original demand of Japan, viz. a free hand in Corea being thus obtained, together with other cessions of Russian territory. These remarks anticipate events to a certain extent, but I shall refer later to some of the events which in 1902 and 1903 led up to the catastrophe, but it cannot be denied that the absolute refusal of Russia in November 1901 to come to terms with Japan in the Far East was the direct cause of the Russo-Japanese War, and later on of the beginning of the revolution and collapse in Russia which utterly destroyed that great and powerful country and have reduced it to a state of degradation and devastation of which history has no parallel.

In 1902 by order of the Emperor a Committee was formed in St. Petersburg called the Committee of the Far East, while Admiral Alexieff was appointed Viceroy of the Russian possessions on the Pacific coast, in command of the Russian military and naval forces and with power to deal directly with the Japanese and Corean Governments. There were thus two Departments in St. Petersburg, viz. the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Committee of the Far East in diplomatic relations with the Japanese Government, and the command of the military and naval forces was divided between the Ministers of War, Marine and Admiral Alexieff. Hopeless

controversy was the result. I will not go into the question of the Yalu mining and timber concession obtained by the Viceroy and some of his speculating friends, which was undoubtedly the direct provocation of the war, but negotiations were in progress between Russia and Japan respecting Corea before the rupture of relations took place. I often heard it alleged later that the Russian Minister and Russian Consuls in Japan, as early as May 1903, had reported to their Government that war was inevitable, and it was even stated that the Emperor of Russia, who was always a warm advocate of peace, wrote on the margin of a despatch in which the Russian Minister had warned the Government of the possibility of an attack upon Port Arthur, the words: "This is absolutely absurd." I should add that, to my knowledge, General Kourapatkin, Minister of War, visited Japan in 1902, and returned with no illusions as to the military efficiency and value of the Japanese Army. But he was almost alone.

It should be remembered also that the policy of the Kaiser had for many years been to get Russian policy involved in the Far East, so as to relieve the pressure of Russia in the Near East and especially at Constantinople, in order to forward Austrian projects in the Balkans, and to consolidate German policy in Turkey with a view to the realization of the German project of a through railway from Vienna to the Persian Gulf. The famous telegram sent by the Kaiser from "The Admiral of the Atlantic to the Admiral of the Pacific" was a faithful indication of this policy.

In the meantime the internal situation of Russia was deteriorating and disaffection amongst the peasants and lower classes was steadily spreading. The farther the distance from St. Petersburg, the more open and fearless was the expression of discontent at the power wielded by a corrupt and venal class of officials, each a little autocrat in his own sphere, profiting by his position to amass wealth at the expense of those over whom he was placed in authority. In many provinces the Government was obliged to stop the taking of the census because the census agents were found to be utilizing their opportunities to spread agitation amongst the ignorant peasants. Disaffection amongst the Government Agents was largely due to the measures of repression of the Government against the students from whom the minor Government officials were largely recruited. While the peasants, owing to a series of bad harvests, were compelled to sell all the corn they had raised in order to pay the Imperial taxes, their prosperity was in consequence slowly and surely deteriorating. If only the corn which had to be sold in order to meet the exigencies of the tax gatherers could

have been retained, famine, with the diseases which rage in its track, would have been spared to millions of peasants. It is hardly a matter of surprise that the Russian peasant, whose mind is steeped in intellectual darkness and ignorance, listened to the voice of the agitators who promised him land and freedom from taxes and joined readily in the agrarian disturbances which already in 1902 had broken out in southern Russia. These disturbances were at that time easily suppressed, the germ of disaffection not having so far sapped the "morale" of the Russian Army.

It was on the 31st May 1902 that peace was signed with the Transvaal, and during the succeeding weeks it was curious to note that the hostility of the official classes towards England was accentuated if anything by the burial of the hatchet in South Africa. This was particularly apparent at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Disappointment at the conclusion of peace on our terms was openly expressed and surprise at this taking place at a moment when the Boer organs were repeatedly declaring the position of the Boer forces to be so advantageous. The feeling amongst the educated classes in Russia was undoubtedly one of disappointment that England had not been humiliated, and this was much accentuated by the knowledge in political circles that not only had the hands of England been freed by the conclusion of peace, but that England's prestige all over the world had been thereby enormously increased.

It was in June 1902 that the coronation of King Edward was to have taken place, but had to be postponed till August on account of the King's serious illness. The Ambassador had already gone to London to attend the ceremony before the postponement took place, and after his return to St. Petersburg did not go back to London to attend the Coronation in August. Consequently I was able to be present at that wonderful ceremony, which profoundly impressed all those who witnessed it. It was a real bit of luck for me.

As an example of the bitterness of the feeling amongst the educated classes in Russia towards England, I may mention that during the first forty-eight hours after the news of the King's illness was known in St. Petersburg not a single Russian called at the Embassy to make inquiries, and the Russians are, as a rule, remarkably punctilious in such matters. A few weeks later the Foreign Office as a matter of courtesy sent instructions to the heads of all Embassies and Legations to thank the Governments to which they were accredited for their kind inquiries as to the King's health during his illness, and I had a secret pleasure in writing a note to the Russian Government to

DEATH OF LORD DUFFERIN

thank them for the inquiries they had never made. I thought this a good way to point out to them their shortcomings.

In February 1902 I heard the sad news of the death of my former and very distinguished chief, Lord Dufferin. In his latter years he had unwisely associated himself with the business enterprises of Whitaker Wright, who eventually became a fraudulent bankrupt, but though no accusation could be levelled against Lord Dufferin, except that he had undertaken something that he did not understand, still it cast a shadow over the last days of that distinguished statesman. I was profoundly touched by receiving from him on his death-bed three days before he died, a souvenir in the shape of a copy of his Rectorial Address to the students of Edinburgh University, with an inscription in his own handwriting, "from D. A.", and a charming letter written for him sending me his "most affectionate wishes for your welfare and happiness". He was a great and most lovable man. When asked two years later by Sir Alfred Lyall to write a few words of appreciation in the memoirs which he was editing, I said amongst other things that my aim in life was to follow in his footsteps and in all ways to be able to emulate his noble example. I little imagined then how closely my career would follow his, in being Ambassador at St. Petersburg, Viceroy of India and Ambassador in Paris, all of which posts were held by him.

The autumn of 1902 was marked by repressive measures by Plehve, the Minister of the Interior, against the agricultural risings in southern Russia and against any agitation for reforms by the local agricultural Committees. Orders were issued with the Emperor's approval for the suppression of all discussion on the subject. The spark of revolution in Russia was, by unwise measures of this description, being gradually fanned into a flame that nothing could quench.

In those days St. Petersburg was a wonderfully fine city. It had magnificent quays about two and a half miles in length with dignified houses and palaces facing the Neva, a broad river with a strong stream upon which countless steamers and steam-launches plied. The fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul, with its unique and delicately fine spire, made the most picturesque background to the aspect across the river from every point of vantage on the principal quay. Another feature of St. Petersburg was the Nevsky Prospect, one of the finest streets in the world, full of fine buildings and the best shops in the town. Whether in summer or winter the Nevsky Prospect and the Quays were crowded with smart carriages or sleighs, all being driven at a terrific pace. In winter it was very pretty when the river was

frozen hard, the roads and tramways crossing and following the river, and smart sleighs with three horses with jingling bells harnessed abreast and long fur trappings trailing in the snow, driven by bearded Russian coachmen padded with pillows, to make them look stout and keep them warm, added greatly to the gaiety of life and brightened up the world of St. Petersburg during the dark days of the winter months when the sun rose above the horizon for only a few brief hours. On the other side of the river were the Islands, of which Krestofsky was the largest, connected by bridges with St. Petersburg, and here in summer everything was green and smiling in the large parks and villa residences scattered over their area.

The Emperor and Court spent the winter months in the Winter Palace and the rest of the year at Tsarskoe Selo and Livadia in the Crimea. The Court functions were always carried out with such magnificence as I have never seen elsewhere. A Court Ball at the Winter Palace was, I believe, unique as the finest of its kind anywhere to be seen. It commenced, after the arrival of the Imperial Family, with a mazurka in which only the Emperor and Empress, the Grand Dukes and Grand Duchesses and Ambassadors and their wives took part, everybody being dressed in full uniform and the ladies covered with magnificent jewels. Then followed the ordinary dances and at midnight a sit-down supper for 4,000 people was served in different rooms. The Emperor and Empress with the Imperial Family and Ambassadors and Ministers sat together at a high table apart, the rest of the Corps Diplomatique and Ministers of State being at other tables in the same room. The remainder of the guests had supper at tables in adjoining rooms. A servant in gold lace livery stood behind each guest, and the serving of every course was announced by bugle. The supper was invariably excellent, the chickens, fruit and flowers being sent especially from Paris for the occasion. But at the end of supper, after the Imperial Family had left the room, a rush was made by Russian guests, and a clean sweep was made of everything from the Imperial supper table. The Tartar instincts were too strong in some of the Russian guests. In addition to these great Court Balls there were smaller dances of an informal character of 300 to 400 people given by the Emperor in the Hermitage, which were perfectly delightful, especially as they presented the opportunity of seeing to the best advantage the priceless treasures of art contained in that palace. On these occasions the Emperor and Empress moved amongst their guests in the most friendly manner and without any ceremony whatever.

Much has been said and written of late years of the unfortunate Emperor

and Empress, but I will say no more here than that the Emperor, had he been an Englishman, would have been the most perfect type of English gentleman, and that the Empress, though shy and reserved, was devoted to England and thoroughly English in all her tastes. The language used by the Emperor and Empress in their family circle was always English. They were invariably most kind to Winifred and me.

Society in St. Petersburg was amusing and frivolous. The Russians were very hospitable, but a drawback to their hospitality was that it was never-ending, for they never went to bed at rational hours. The Grand Duke Vladimir and Grand Duchess Maria Paulovna showed the utmost hospitality towards us of the British Embassy and we used to play tennis with the Grand Duke during the winter in a covered court at the Admiralty lit by electricity. It was a great resource to us during the dark and dreary winter months, but towards the end of my stay in St. Petersburg we were deprived of this relaxation owing to the whole of the Admiralty buildings being destroyed by fire, just at the moment when a Committee had been appointed to make inquiries into alleged defalcations in the accounts of the Admiralty. It need hardly be said that all the accounts were burnt in the fire. Rather a drastic measure to take to avoid unwelcome inquiries !

As a general rule the Grand Dukes afforded a bad example and brought discredit upon the Imperial Family by the vicious and debauched lives that, with few exceptions, they notoriously led. On the other hand, the aristocracy behaved with much dignity and courtesy, gambling for larger stakes than they could afford being their principal failing. This necessitated from time to time the retirement of families to their country estates for prolonged periods in order to rehabilitate their family fortunes. We of the British Embassy saw a great deal of the family of Prince Belosselsky, who lived on Krestovsky Island, Prince Serge being an enthusiastic sportsman and polo player. They maintained an excellent polo ground and we all played polo during the summer and the games and matches were a great social feature.

I had the good fortune to be one of twelve members of the English fishing club at Warpa Saari in Finland, of whom six members did not fish. It was only five hours by rail from St. Petersburg and I frequently paid three-day visits to the club with either Winifred or one of the Secretaries. It was still easier when I had a house for the summer in Finland only an hour from our river. We killed an enormous number of salmon and trout which we used to distribute to our friends and to the hospitals. Night

frozen hard, the roads and tramways crossing and following the river, and smart sleighs with three horses with jingling bells harnessed abreast and long fur trappings trailing in the snow, driven by bearded Russian coachmen padded with pillows, to make them look stout and keep them warm, added greatly to the gaiety of life and brightened up the world of St. Petersburg during the dark days of the winter months when the sun rose above the horizon for only a few brief hours. On the other side of the river were the Islands, of which Krestofsky was the largest, connected by bridges with St. Petersburg, and here in summer everything was green and smiling in the large parks and villa residences scattered over their area.

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fishing in June was delightful when the sun fell below the horizon for only a few minutes before rising again. The club house was on an island in the middle of a roaring, rushing river with rapids immediately below, and one had sometimes exciting moments when a fish carried the line down the rapids. The subscription to this unique club was £15 a year.

Capercailzie shooting was an amusing sport in the spring, but I felt much sympathy with the cockbird at being killed at the moment of the climax of his lovesong. Still, as this sport took place at daybreak, it was necessary to be in the forest at 2 a.m. at latest and it was a wonderful experience to hear and to see the birds and animals of the forest wake up.

After the return of the Ambassador in December 1902 I went home on leave and learnt of the appointment of Sir F. Bertie, Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, as Ambassador at Rome. This created a vacancy amongst the four Under-Secretaries which was offered to me in the following January and was gladly accepted. Lord Knollys wrote to me that the King had pressed my candidature for the post very strongly upon Lord Lansdowne.

On the whole I was very pleased to leave St. Petersburg with its most trying climate, but I never regretted the five years I spent there as they afforded me a wonderful experience, and without it my later career might have been very different. Still, it was a perpetual source of irritation to me to feel the humiliating position of our Embassy during those years in face of the hostility openly displayed towards England by the Russian Government and military and official classes, and our weakness and helplessness to retaliate in any way. I felt the absolute necessity of coming to some sort of agreement with Russia upon the questions in conflict in Asia between the two countries, since we were losing ground all the time, but I realized when I left how hopeless it would be to enter then upon negotiations with any prospect of success except on terms that would imply complete capitulation and the entire abandonment of our policy in Asia. I felt that, in accepting the Under-Secretaryship at the Foreign Office, I would be able to impress my views in this respect upon the higher authorities, but I little realized how soon the whole aspect of the question would be changed by an improvement in our relations with France, in which, curiously enough, I had also a modest part to play.

CHAPTER VIII

L O N D O N , 1 9 0 3 - 1 9 0 4

AS soon as I had packed up my effects and taken leave of my friends in St. Petersburg I entered upon my duties as the junior of the four Under-Secretaries at the Foreign Office, Lord Lansdowne being Secretary of State and Lord Sanderson Permanent Under-Secretary. The affairs of Persia, Afghanistan, Tibet, Egypt and Morocco were relegated to my superintendence as well as the Treaty and Consular Departments, of which I knew and understood the work. I was pleased with this distribution as the countries assigned to me were so full of interest and I was happy with my work.

Two months later the visits to be paid by the King after his accession to the Throne came up for discussion at the Foreign Office as His Majesty had decided to go abroad at the end of March. To my surprise I heard that the question had been raised by the King of my accompanying His Majesty instead of a Cabinet Minister as is usual on such journeys, but that Lord Lansdowne opposed the idea. On the other hand, I heard that the King insisted and refused to yield. Things drifted till within a week of the date of the King's proposed departure, and as the subject had become one of general knowledge and discussion I called on Lady Lansdowne, whom I knew well, and told her that although I realized of course that I was entirely under Lord Lansdowne's orders, still if there was any likelihood of my having to accompany the King it would only be fair to tell me at once as naturally I would have to make certain preparations for such a journey. She entirely agreed, with the result that she spoke to Lord Lansdowne, who told me very unwillingly that I was to accompany the King and that I was to receive the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary in the Diplomatic Service. I need hardly say that I was greatly pleased and astonished at my exceptional good fortune and was entirely at a loss to understand why I had been selected in this unusual and unexpected manner.

It was on the 30th March that the King embarked on the Royal yacht
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at Portsmouth and began his first journey of visits to European Courts which in the end proved so fruitful of satisfactory results. His first visit was to the King of Portugal, England's oldest ally, and our destination was the Tagus. I remember so well a young diplomatist telling me that people in Lisbon raved about the entry into the Tagus in which he failed to see anything beautiful, but that what he had really admired had been the exit from the Tagus. The sea was rough but not unpleasantly so. It was amusing that on the first afternoon at sea the King insisted on all the members of his suite, including Soveral, the Portuguese Minister who was with us, putting on their full dress uniforms for his inspection. It was somewhat painful staggering about the deck in full uniform, but it seemed to amuse the King to see us. Our clothes were all criticized without exception.

A day or two before I left London my friend Lord Knollys, in discussing my prospective duties when in attendance upon the King, had asked me if I played bridge. I replied that I could hardly have survived five years of St. Petersburg and parties nearly every night till two and three in the morning if I could not play bridge, and all he said to me was "Don't"! Having profound confidence in his advice I did not ask why. On the first evening on board the Royal yacht the King after dinner said to me: "Come on, Charlie, and have a game of bridge." Knowing that there were plenty of others to play with the King I replied: "I am afraid I do not play." The King was surprised but not annoyed, and although what I said was not quite the truth I was glad that I avoided playing bridge, as otherwise I could never have got through all the work that fell to me. Still, I may say that, in loyalty to the King, I have never played bridge since.

The visit to Lisbon passed off very successfully, but I remember pointing out to the King on landing how dangerous it was for him and the King of Portugal to be surrounded by dense crowds which the police were absolutely incompetent to control, and that it seemed to me that amongst the many photographers surrounding the two Kings it would be very easy for an anarchist to conceal a pistol in the camera. I little realized then how in a very few years' time the same crowds were to assassinate the King of Portugal himself and his eldest son. The two most interesting incidents of the visit were an expedition to Cintra, a truly lovely spot, and a Portuguese bullfight. In Portugal a bullfight is entirely different from its counterpart in Spain. It is a very pretty spectacle, with nothing to offend the taste, neither horse nor bull being injured, the whole performance being in the

nature of a tournament with an exhibition of horsemanship, the most beautiful trained horses being used without any serious risk.

From Lisbon the King went to Gibraltar, where His Majesty remained five days on board his yacht. It was during his stay that the King received the news that President Loubet was to pay an official visit to Algiers, and as Anglo-French relations had been very unsatisfactory during the Boer War, owing to the sympathy shown by the French to the Boers, and also on account of the disgusting caricatures of Queen Victoria that had been current in the French Press, King Edward decided to make an effort to place Anglo-French relations on a better footing. He had the happy idea of sending four battleships of the Channel Squadron, that were lying in the harbour and under the command of Admiral Curzon Howe, to Algiers to salute the French President on his arrival. M. Loubet was delighted with this unexpected act of courtesy and sent a very friendly telegram to the King, thanking him and expressing the hope that His Majesty would visit Paris on his way home. It had been no part of the King's programme to visit Paris, but after receiving this invitation he decided at once to do so and informed the Government of his intention. The Cabinet were averse to his doing so, fearing that public opinion in France would be hostile and that an unpleasant incident might occur, but King Edward knew the public of Paris better than his Cabinet and persisted in his decision to go to Paris. Later events proved how right the King was and his wisdom in going. The history of Europe might have been very different but for his decision.

The only other incident worth noting during the King's stay at Gibraltar was the announcement by His Majesty made at an official dinner of the promotion of General Sir George White, the defender of Ladysmith and the Governor of Gibraltar, to the rank of Field-Marshal.

In view of what I have already related as to the unwillingness of the Cabinet to accede to the King's wishes in certain cases, of which other instances were to occur before long, it may be of interest to point out what I believe to be the explanation. There is little doubt that during the last few years of Queen Victoria's reign, when her energy and industry began to fail almost imperceptibly, the power of the Cabinet gradually grew, and many important decisions of the Cabinet were carried out without the usual reference to the Queen. As far as I know there was no abuse of power by the Cabinet, but gradually the Sovereign was, chiefly on account of her health, consulted less and less. It was only a short time before the Queen's death that the Prince of Wales was permitted to know anything

of the foreign policy of the country, or even to see the daily sections of the Foreign Office telegrams which were circulated to every member of the Cabinet and to all the Government Departments. When the King ascended the Throne he demanded, and very rightly too, that he should not be ignored and that he should be consulted and kept informed of the policy of his Government, especially in connection with Foreign Affairs. To this demand he experienced at first a certain opposition, especially on the part of the Foreign Office, and he had, in my opinion, good grounds for complaint. However, he was not the sort of man to be thwarted by any Cabinet or Minister, and he very soon levelled all the barriers opposed to him and by the soundness of his views on all matters referred to him, soon convinced the Government that from his knowledge of men and his shrewd appreciation of events his advice was well worth taking on all questions of the hour. It was in 1905 when Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman's Government came into power that King Edward's position was absolutely established, and that the new Government recognized in full the advantage of His Majesty's co-operation. King Edward always spoke in the terms of the highest praise and appreciation of his relations with Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, and of the consideration which the latter always showed him.

From Gibraltar the Royal yacht, escorted by a squadron of cruisers, proceeded to Malta in lovely weather. As the *Victoria and Albert* entered the harbour of Valetta in the most brilliant sunshine the scene was one that could not easily be forgotten. The fine old bastions built by the Turkish prisoners of the famous Knights of St. John, overlooking the harbour, were black with people anxious to give a joyous welcome to the first British Sovereign that had ever visited the island. All the vessels in the harbour were gaily decked with bunting, and, as the King's yacht proceeded up the Grand Harbour, the guns from the forts and ships thundered their salutes, the crews cheered and the bands on the ships and on shore played "God save the King". The enthusiasm was very remarkable and the sight thrilling for those who witnessed it. I shall never forget my dismay at receiving immediately on arrival the texts of six addresses to be presented to the King by various communities with a warning that the replies would have to be presented in an hour's time. They were ready, but the King had already received four deputations before the last two were completed.

Five days were spent at Malta in reviews, receptions and popular fêtes. Everything passed off most satisfactorily and the demonstrations of loyalty and affection given by the people of Malta exceeded all anticipations.

MALTA AND NAPLES

On the 21st April the *Victoria and Albert* slipped her buoy and the King left Malta escorted by a fleet of battleships who performed successfully that most dangerous of evolutions termed "the gridiron" when they had reached the open sea. Owing to bad weather the night was spent in harbour at Syracuse, and on the following morning the journey was resumed and Naples was reached on the morning of the 23rd.

On the previous evening as we passed the island of Stromboli in the Lipari Islands three successive volcanic eruptions took place, to salute the Royal yacht as it were, great clouds of hot cinders and black smoke being hurled into the air accompanied by loud rumbling sounds and streams of red-hot lava pouring down the side of the mountain and hissing into the sea. It was a wonderful sight and we were only a few hundred yards distant.

Four days were spent at Naples in expeditions to places of general interest accompanied sometimes by the Queen of Portugal and the Crown Prince who were present on board a yacht in the Bay. On one of these occasions I had to protest vigorously to the King on his going off alone in a carriage with only the Queen of Portugal and her young son through the most crowded streets of Naples, where they were literally mobbed by enthusiastic Italians who hung on to the carriage. Nothing happened, of course, but Naples had some strange people amongst its inhabitants. The King with that fatalism which was characteristic remarked that, if anything were fated to happen, nothing could prevent it, but when I pointed out that I at least would be regarded as having failed in my duty if the most ordinary precautions to secure the King's safety had not been taken, the King agreed and said he would not do it again.

The event which impressed itself most on my memory during those days at Naples, on account of the amusement it gave to me and others and eventually to Lord Rosebery himself, was a luncheon given by him to the King at his villa at Posilippo which lasted from one to four o'clock. We actually left the table at 4 p.m.

Lord Rosebery's villa was in a lovely spot commanding a view of the Bay of Naples and opposite to the island of Capri. A few years later he presented the property to His Majesty's Government and it became for a time the country residence of the Ambassador in Rome.

The King left Naples on the morning of April 27th and arrived at Rome in the afternoon.

Here it is necessary to make a slight divergence and to give some explana-

tions of the circumstances attending the King's visit to the King of Italy at the Quirinal and more particularly of his visit to the Pope at the Vatican.

In visiting Italy the King had originally intended to go to Naples and Rome informally, spending only one day at Rome, where he would visit the King of Italy and possibly the Pope and make the Embassy his residence. The King of Italy was naturally anxious that King Edward should stay as his guest at the Quirinal, though he would not have raised serious objections to His Majesty staying at the British Embassy, but the Italian Government when they heard of the suggestion informed the King of Italy that such an arrangement would injure the Government and strongly deprecated it, insisting on King Edward being the King's personal guest. It was pointed out to the King of Italy that the King of England had many Roman Catholic subjects and might consequently think it right to pay a visit to the Pope, and that though he could hardly go direct to the Vatican from the Quirinal there were many ways of evading this dilemma and of satisfying Papal susceptibilities. Consequently, it was decided that the King's visit to Rome should have an official character, should last three days and that he should reside at the Quirinal as the guest of the King of Italy.

The question of a visit to the Vatican was more difficult and provoked much discussion. Even before the King left England the possibility of a visit to the Pope had been discussed in the Cabinet and great opposition shown to the idea, principally by Mr. Balfour the Prime Minister, and Mr. Joseph Chamberlain. It was during the King's stay at Gibraltar that the Ambassador, Sir F. Bertie, telegraphed that Monsignor Stonor had suggested a visit to the Pope, but in view of the opposition of the Cabinet a reply was sent at once instructing Sir F. Bertie¹ to explain verbally that the visit would be impossible owing to the short time the King would be in Rome. These instructions were never carried out, Monsignor Stonor having temporarily left Rome. Almost simultaneously the King received a telegram from Mr. Balfour, who had received a visit from the Duke of Norfolk and Lord Edmund Talbot² who maintained that for the King to abstain from visiting the Pope would be regarded by the Catholic world as a deliberate slight upon His Holiness and would deeply wound the sentiments of the King's Roman Catholic subjects. Nevertheless, Mr. Balfour in a further telegram expressed once more his objection to a formal visit and declined to alter the tenor of the advice of the Cabinet to His Majesty.

¹ Afterwards Viscount Bertie of Thame. ² Afterwards Viscount FitzAlan.

VISIT TO THE VATICAN

It was a very unsatisfactory and vacillating telegram. It had however the effect of deciding the King as to the importance and necessity of a visit of an informal character to the Pope. Curiously enough, I received a letter from Sir E. Barrington, dated the day after the Prime Minister's telegram, in which he expressed the hope that the visit to the Pope would materialize and stated that Lord Lansdowne hoped so too. Barrington added that Mr. Balfour had hoped that the King would read between the lines and pay an informal, and not a State visit to the Pope. I had however no intention of allowing the King to be exposed to criticism in England by paying a visit to the Vatican while Mr. Balfour sheltered himself behind a Cabinet decision, so I drafted a reply with the approval of the King giving His Majesty's reasons for considering a visit to the Pope not only desirable but necessary, expressing the King's regret at being in divergence with the views of his Government, and asking to hear further from Mr. Balfour on the subject. The King's answer was considered adroit, but it was said that it might even have been better if he had replied: "If my Ministers want me to do a rude thing they may go to the Devil." By the King's orders I had to write a long letter to Lord Lansdowne to which the King made additions, explaining the whole situation and how as Prince of Wales he had on several occasions been received by the Pope, and that to omit doing so after his accession to the Throne could hardly be regarded in any other light than an affront, especially as the German Emperor, who was visiting Rome at that moment, was to visit the Pope. The King's annoyance at being placed in an equivocal position by Mr. Balfour's telegram was clearly stated and the hope was expressed that, whatever the opinion of the Cabinet might be, the King might be told distinctly that the question of the desirability of an informal visit to the Pope might be left to His Majesty's discretion. As a result of these manœuvres Mr. Balfour telegraphed that Sir F. Bertie should be instructed to arrange for an unofficial visit to the Pope, if possible, on the initiative of the Pope. He at the same time expressed fears as to what public opinion in England might be on the subject, fears which, it may be mentioned here, proved absolutely groundless. The King thus gained his point and everything seemed easy, but it was soon apparent that influences at the Vatican working without the knowledge of the Pope, might yet frustrate the visit. The Vatican was informed that the King would be willing to pay a visit to the Pope, if His Holiness expressed a desire to see him. Every sort of intrigue began, at the instance of Cardinal Rampolla, Secretary of State, in order to create

the impression that it was King Edward who made the first step to see the Pope, with the result that the visit at one moment had very nearly to be abandoned. In the end it was only through the intervention of Cardinal Merry del Val, who had direct access to the Pope, and who explained to him the intrigue of which the Pope knew nothing, that the visit was arranged by the Pope simply expressing the pleasure he would have if the King would pay him a visit. The details of the visit were left to be arranged after our arrival in Rome.

King Edward, on his arrival in Rome, had a great reception from the people on his way to the Quirinal in an open carriage with the King of Italy. The population seemed really enthusiastic and gave the King a veritable ovation. The weather was sunny and bright and Rome looked its very best. The decorations of the streets were exceptionally fine and artistic, the explanation being that, instead of leaving them to individual enterprise, they had been entrusted to a Committee of Artists and Sculptors for their supervision. The three days spent in Rome were very fully occupied with official receptions, military reviews and visits to objects of interest in the Italian capital. The afternoon of the 29th April was reserved for a visit by the King to the Vatican.

On arriving in Rome, I received a message from Cardinal Rampolla that he would like to see me the same evening, but I had to defer my visit till next day. He received me in a demonstrative manner but I was unpleasantly impressed by him. His chief anxiety appeared to be to get the King to call upon him personally, quoting the precedent of the German Emperor who called upon him officially, but I replied that the King only paid visits to Sovereigns and Presidents of Republics and that His Majesty could not admit that his actions should be in any way bound by precedents set by the German Emperor. He went so far as to suggest that the King should visit him at the Irish College which was at that time a hot-bed of anti-British sedition. After more verbal skirmishes of minor importance the day and hour were fixed for the King's visit to the Pope and I saw no more of Cardinal Rampolla, who evidently was piqued and wished to show umbrage by his absence from the Pope's reception.

In order to meet the susceptibilities of the Vatican it had been decided that the King should start to the Vatican from the British Embassy in Sir F. Bertie's carriage. His Majesty took me with him, leaving General Stanley Clarke and Admiral Lambton to follow in another carriage. The streets were crowded with people and from the Castle of St. Angelo to the

very gates of the Vatican they were lined with troops. On arrival within the precincts of the Vatican the King was received with much pomp and ceremony, and a procession was formed through the State apartments to the central Hall of Tapestries, where a vast throng of officials was in attendance. The scene was one of great brilliancy, Cardinals in scarlet robes, a large group of high ecclesiastics, Chamberlains in sixteenth-century costumes, officers of the Swiss Guard in armour and of the Noble Guard in scarlet and gold uniforms. All the English-speaking Chamberlains had been put on duty for the occasion, and included a former Colonel of the Royal Artillery, an American diplomatist, a Sussex squire and others, forming an interesting but strange assembly.

As the King entered the private ante-room the Pope moved slowly forward, full of dignity, to meet and welcome His Majesty. The appearance of the aged Pontiff Leo XIII, with his pale face, silvery hair and white robes, made a very solemn and impressive effect. At the sight of His Holiness everybody in the room fell on their knees, with the exception of the King, his suite and the Papal Guards. The Pope retired with the King into his private apartments and spent about half an hour together talking of every sort of question, Venezuela, Somaliland, Lord Salisbury, some occasion on which he had seen Queen Victoria forty years earlier, etc. At his request the King sent for his suite to be presented to the Pope.

Here I may mention the fact that a presentation to the Pope was a predicament that I had foreseen, and that I had asked the King how we were to behave towards the Pope if we had the honour of being presented, adding that I personally had no objection to kissing his ring in accordance with the usual practice amongst Roman Catholics. The King said it would never do for it to be known that the members of his suite had kissed the Pope's ring, and after some thought he said that we should remain at some distance from the Pope and bow to him three or four times. Consequently we followed literally our instructions and on entering into the Pope's presence we remained standing at some distance and bowed repeatedly. My impression was that the Pope appreciated our difficulty, for quite spontaneously he said in French, "I am so pleased to see you here to-day that I must shake you by the hand." We then moved forward in turn and shook hands with the Pope. It only showed what a clever man Leo XIII was, and in the few minutes' conversation that he had with each of us he was perfectly charming. Finally he said he wished to repeat to us what he had already said to the King, viz. how pleased he was to have

an opportunity of seeing and receiving the King and how grateful he was to His Majesty for all the hospitality granted to Roman Catholics in England and for the religious liberty which prevailed in every corner of the British Empire. He spoke in a strong clear voice and with much animation, and it was very evident that, in spite of the frailness of his body, his 93 years of life had not impaired in any way his mental capacity, which still remained of a very high order. The King took leave of the Pope and left with the same ceremonial, and His Majesty felt, as also his suite, that this visit to the aged and venerable Pontiff was one of the most interesting events of the King's journey.

The King's visit to Italy was really a great success since it resulted in reviving memories of former more friendly relations which had prevailed between the two countries in the past and which, through unfortunate misunderstandings, had gradually become more lukewarm. These friendly sentiments were once more restored. The only untoward incident that occurred during this visit was the serious illness of the King for one whole day when he suffered from complete collapse owing, I believe, to over-fatigue.

On the 30th April the King left Rome by train for Paris and was met at Dijon by Sir Edmund Monson, British Ambassador in Paris. He brought with him the text of an address to be presented to the King by the British Chamber of Commerce on his arrival and King Edward asked me to draw up a very cordial reply. With this encouragement and with my own strong conviction that friendship with France should be the keystone of our policy in Europe which would have its reflex in Russia and in Asia, I produced a reply which even the King thought might be going too far, and he asked me to submit it to Sir E. Monson for his opinion. The latter after reading it said that he entirely approved and foretold that it would create a sensation and have an extraordinary effect in Paris when published.

The King arrived in Paris in the afternoon of the 1st May at the station in the Bois de Boulogne and drove with the President of the Republic to the British Embassy where he was to reside. I followed in the second carriage with M. Delcassé, Minister for Foreign Affairs, whom I had known when a Secretary of the Embassy seven years earlier. Although there were considerable crowds in the Champs Élysées who cheered the King as he passed I could not fail to notice that amongst them there were small groups who shouted, "Vivent les Boers!" Naturally the King heard nothing, surrounded as was his carriage by the escort of cuirassiers with their clattering

hoofs. I am sure Delcassé noticed it and hoped that I had not heard, for he was all the time trying to distract my attention by saying repeatedly, "Quel enthousiasme !" Some of the King's suite who stayed at the Hôtel Bristol told me that at first there was always a small group in front of the hotel who proclaimed their sympathy with the Boers whenever any one of them passed in or out.

After the King's arrival he received the address of the British Chamber of Commerce in the Embassy and gave the reply prepared for him. The immediate publication of the King's speech throughout Paris made a profound impression upon the public mind, testifying unexpectedly as it did to the King's desire for a real friendship with France and the removal of all possible misunderstandings.

The three days spent in Paris were chiefly occupied in the usual official functions and ceremonies, but what was in my opinion the most important of all was the King's visit one morning with M. Loubet to the Hôtel de Ville, where he was received by the provincial and municipal authorities. In reply to speeches made by the President of the Municipality, and by the Prefect of the Seine, the King made the happiest little speech in only a few words in French which touched exactly the right chord. In thanking them he said : "Je n'oublierai jamais ma visite à votre charmante ville, et je puis vous assurer que c'est avec le plus grand plaisir que je reviens à Paris où je me trouve toujours comme si j'étais chez moi." These few words produced an electric impression throughout Paris, which was felt during every succeeding moment of the King's visit. The same evening the King attended a gala performance at the Opera, where he had a most enthusiastic reception, and driving home to the Embassy in a brougham with me in attendance his carriage was literally mobbed by a most friendly and cheering crowd, who addressed him all the time with "Vive Edouard", "Notre bon Edouard", and such familiar but friendly expressions which proved that His Majesty received a veritable and popular ovation and one which I need hardly say gratified him greatly. On the morning of the 4th May the King left Cherbourg on board the Royal yacht *en route* for Portsmouth.

It is almost impossible to measure the success and importance from a political point of view of the King's visit to Paris. It was really the turning-point in Anglo-French relations which has been so fruitful in its results. There is no doubt that when the news first reached Paris of the King's intended visit the feeling was that the King had been inspired by a desire to put an end to all the bickerings of the past few years, and this feeling

met with a generous response from the people of Paris even before his arrival. But it was only after his arrival and after hearing the sympathetic words used by the King on every occasion that he addressed a French audience that all barriers were broken down and that he met with an avalanche of the warmest sympathy from Frenchmen of all classes. The enthusiasm which greeted the King fully justified his prescience and his knowledge of the Parisians, and he succeeded in three days in establishing a new and friendly atmosphere beyond the dreams of any statesman or politician. Happily this new development met with a generous reception by the English Press, and the improvement in the relations between England and France, so happily initiated by the King, receiving as it did a further impulse by the visit of the French President to London in the following July, was finally consecrated in a definite Anglo-French Treaty signed in the summer of 1904. During the course of the summer months of 1903 M. Doumer, the French Minister of the Colonies, was sent to London to report to the French Government whether an agreement between the two countries was within the scope of practical politics, and on his return to Paris conversations between the two Governments were commenced at once and proceeded smoothly along their normal course.

Honour to whom honour is due, and the honour of the improvement in Anglo-French relations, which ended in a Treaty almost within the year, was due entirely to the initiative and political *flair* of King Edward, and if he had listened to the objections of his Cabinet he would never have gone to Paris.

On crossing from Cherbourg to Portsmouth the King thanked me for my services as chief of His Majesty's suite, conferred on me the C.V.O. and presented me with a gold cigarette-case with his initials in diamonds.

The five weeks that I had the honour of spending in attendance upon His Majesty were the first occasion upon which I had been brought into close official relations with the King and I look back upon them with happiness and gratitude. He was a very easy man to deal with, always kind and trustful that one was doing one's best for him. His occasional outbursts were very amusing. It was my duty to go to him every morning at 10 a.m. when he sat down to breakfast in order to discuss the programme for the day. Often I had to suggest a visit which I knew would be irksome, or that he should see somebody that I knew he would not want to see, but that it was important he should see, and he would exclaim, "No, no, damned if I will do it!" But he always did it, however tiresome it might be to

him, without my having to argue the point or in fact say another word. He had a very strong sense of the duties which his position entailed and he never shirked them.

The King had a delightful rough-haired terrier named "Cæsar" that never left him. Whenever I went into the King's cabin this dog always went for my trousers and worried them, much to the King's delight. I used not to take the slightest notice and went on talking all the time to the King, which I think amused His Majesty still more.

During the remainder of that year, I worked hard at the Foreign Office, and in touch with Lord Curzon who was Viceroy of India, on the questions of Persia, Afghanistan and Thibet and not without some small successes. I also proposed, and got accepted, a new system of grading in the Diplomatic Service which corresponded more with the system existing abroad, and which would exclude the depressing possibility of a long stage of eleven or twelve years as a Second Secretary, from which I, like many others, had suffered. That system has been in force since 1904. In the meantime I was pressing my propaganda as to the absolute necessity of an understanding with Russia and that the easiest way to achieve this result was to arrive first at an agreement with France, the ally of Russia. My views were received with favour, and as the conversations with the French Government were making satisfactory progress, Lord Lansdowne agreed towards the end of the year that something should be done to come to terms with Russia, in any event, that a first advance on our part should be made. Consequently I was invited by the King to Windsor at the New Year with the express intention of having a preliminary conversation with Count Benckendorff, with Lord Lansdowne's approval and on his instructions. The conversations I initiated at Windsor, which were taken up by Lord Lansdowne, gave good promise of eventual success, but unfortunately the Russo-Japanese War broke out in the following February and all negotiations were in consequence postponed *sine die*.

It was on the 1st December 1903 that I learnt for the first time from Lord Knollys that the King intended to put my name forward as a successor to Sir C. Scott, Ambassador in Russia, whose mission was to terminate in the spring of 1904. To me it was a most unexpected surprise. Again I heard a fortnight later that, when my appointment had been mooted to Sir E. Barrington, Lord Lansdowne's Private Secretary, who had demurred on account of my alleged usefulness at the Foreign Office, the King had definitely stated that he intended to insist upon my appointment. It was

on the 15th February that the post was offered to me by Lord Lansdowne and, of course, accepted with enthusiasm. I had really never imagined the possibility of becoming an Ambassador when only 45 years old, especially as I had been only a Second Secretary at the age of 38. It surpassed all my wildest dreams.

The King wrote me a charming letter on the day of my appointment saying, "I have long wished that you should occupy the post of Ambassador at St. Petersburg and am delighted that everything has been satisfactorily settled. Your duties will not be easy ones, but I am convinced you will fulfil them admirably." Among the many letters of congratulation that I received I value particularly one received from Lord Rosebery. He wrote :

"Let me congratulate you most sincerely on the announcement of your appointment to St. Petersburg over which I rejoice for public and personal reasons. Anything which advances you in your profession gives me the sincerest pleasure, for you know that I took an interest in your career from very early times. . . . I heartily wish you success and believe in it."

A letter from Lord Curzon from India was quite a good "chit" for me. His words were :

"I am delighted that you are going to St. Petersburg. It is a most admirable appointment, far away the best. But what the Foreign Office will do without you I cannot think. I have recognized your clear head and strong hand there in every direction since you became Under-Secretary, and my own policy and views have received an encouragement and impetus that they never received before. For all this let me thank you warmly and wish you the best of successes in the great post to which you go."

Following my appointment, honours seemed to be showered upon me and I was sworn a Privy Councillor and received the K.C.M.G. and K.C.V.O. within a few weeks.

Here I would like to make a few observations regarding the Diplomatic Service in which I served for nearly forty-three years. When I was appointed Ambassador at St. Petersburg at the age of 45 many people said to me, and no doubt many others thought, how "lucky" I had been. Well, my theory is that one makes one's own luck, and I can honestly say that, during the twenty-four years I had already served, I had worked much harder than most of my contemporaries and had been to much worse posts. My theory in the service was that "power" was the first aim, regardless of pay or post, and that when the offer of a post was made the consideration

to be taken into account was not whether the post was an agreeable one or not, or whether the pay was as good or better than the last post held, but whether it would bring more power or opportunities for interesting work and distinction. For these reasons I had endeavoured to concentrate my service in the Balkan States, Turkey, Persia and St. Petersburg, rather than in more pleasant posts elsewhere, and my pay had always fluctuated in the most extraordinary manner, in spite of the fact that I had often had difficulty in making both ends meet. For instance, beginning from 1896 my pay as Secretary in Paris was £400 ; from 1896 to 1898 at Tehran, about £2,500 ; from 1898 to 1903 at St. Petersburg, £1,300 ; at the Foreign Office from 1903 to 1904, £900 ; at St. Petersburg from 1904 to 1906, £8,000 ; at the Foreign Office from 1906 to 1910, £2,800 ; in India, 1910 to 1916, £19,000 ; at the Foreign Office from 1916 to 1920, £3,000 ; in Paris from 1920 to 1922, £14,000. Many of my friends in the service have attached too much importance to the amenities of their posts and to the pay attached to them, refusing posts when both of these were less, and in my opinion there could be no greater mistake. Some of my friends thought I was a fool to give up the Embassy at St. Petersburg for the hard work and lesser pay at the Foreign Office, but I remarked to one of them that I would be giving instructions to my successor at the Embassy, and if I had not gone to the Foreign Office as Permanent Under-Secretary, I would probably not have been Viceroy of India.

CHAPTER IX

ST. PETERSBURG, 1904 - 1906

I LEFT for St. Petersburg on the 12th May and reached my post on the 15th.

Here it is necessary for me to digress and, in order to bring the story of Russia up-to-date, to relate that during the year 1903 relations between the Russians and Japanese were steadily deteriorating and were aggravated by the activities of Admiral Alexieff, Viceroy of the Far East, and speculators associated with him, in connection with timber and other concessions on the Yalu river, which were encroachments on the independence of Corea. There has been some doubt as to the circumstances in which war was actually declared, but the fact is indisputable that on February 6th the Japanese Ambassador in St. Petersburg broke off diplomatic relations and stated that the Japanese Government reserved to themselves "the right to take such independent action as they may deem best to consolidate and defend their menaced position". On the evening of the 8th February the Japanese fleet attacked Port Arthur and sank several Russian warships. The repugnance of the Emperor to believe in the possibility of war was so invincible that he actually attended a performance at the Opera the very evening during which the attack on Port Arthur took place.

Consequently war was in full progress between Russia and Japan at the moment of my arrival in St. Petersburg and the position of Englishmen in the Russian capital, as the allies of Japan, was not an easy one. The Russian forces on the Yalu had just experienced a severe defeat and had been driven across the river with heavy losses of guns and prisoners. To make the best of a bad job General Kourapatkin sent a telegram to the Chief of the Staff in St. Petersburg, "*Félicitez moi, les Japonais ont traversé le Yalu*", as though it had been a strategic move on his part. Nevertheless, great optimism prevailed amongst the upper classes and confidence in the ultimately victorious outcome of the war. Amongst the middle

and commercial classes the war caused great depression owing to the want of money and stagnation of trade, while the lower classes, the 75 per cent of the population, were absolutely indifferent to the war, knew nothing about Manchuria or Japan, or what the war was about. At the same time, revolutionary agitation was spreading and the malicious sinking in the dockyard in St. Petersburg of the battleship *Orel* and an attempt to blow up the arsenal at Cronstadt gave the Government cause for serious pre-occupation. Corruption was also rampant, and even the Red Cross trains and supplies sent to the front were the objects of spoliation by dishonest contractors and others in league with Government officials.

On arrival at St. Petersburg I received a most friendly welcome from all my friends and the officials that I had known during the previous five years of my stay in Russia, having as a matter of fact been away from St. Petersburg only fifteen months. My appointment was regarded as a mark of the King's peaceful tendencies and of the Government's desire for more friendly relations. Count Lamsdorff gave me a particularly warm and friendly greeting, and I very soon gathered that he, General Kourapatkin and Plehve, the Minister of the Interior, were those of the Government who had striven throughout to avoid war and had deprecated any action likely to lead to it, General Kourapatkin being well aware of the efficiency of the Japanese Army, but they had been over-ruled by the Emperor at the instigation of the Grand Dukes Alexis and Alexander Michailovitch and the Chauvinists of the military party. My official audience of the Emperor and Empress could not have been more satisfactory. I felt like a Lord Mayor when I was being driven to the Palace at Tsarskoe Selo in a gold coach drawn by six white horses. The Emperor gave me a warm welcome and said how glad he was to see me back again. After I had delivered the King's messages I was made to sit down with him and the Empress, and they talked about the Royal Family, London, people in society, etcetera, quite happily for about half an hour. In spite, however, of everybody's general friendliness towards me the situation became gradually more difficult every day owing to the continued Japanese successes at the front and the fact that we were the ally of Japan.

The victorious passage of the Yalu by the Japanese armies was soon followed by the defeat of the Russians at Kinchau. This second unexpected reverse caused general consternation, but in no sense diminished the optimism generally prevalent in St. Petersburg as to the eventual result of the war. This defeat rendered impossible the evacuation of Port Arthur which

General Kourapatkin had advocated but had not been allowed to effect, as the abandonment of the fortress and the destruction of the Russian fleet blockaded in the harbour were regarded as such irreparable blows to Russian prestige as absolutely to preclude their adoption. It was therefore decided to send the whole of the 1st Army to attempt the relief of Port Arthur. The Army was sent under the command of General Stackelberg and met with a serious reverse from the Japanese at Liao-Yang; the Russians admitted a loss of 4,000 men, said to be 6,000 or 7,000 men. The Russians claimed a tactical success since it had exposed the strength and disposition of the Japanese forces, but obviously the Japanese would not have grudged the Russians a few more tactical successes of that kind. Efforts were made to restore public confidence by statements that Port Arthur was impregnable and well provisioned, and that the Russian squadron was in a most efficient state. To maintain this theory orders were sent to the Russian Squadron to make a sortie which resulted in an immediate attack by Japanese destroyers and the loss of the battleship *Peresvet* and such severe damage to the *Sevastopol* and *Diane* that they had to be towed back into harbour.

People were then beginning to ask what advantage had been gained by the occupation of Port Arthur and Manchuria and even what Russia could gain by a successful war against Japan. Kokovtseff, the Minister of Finance, spoke openly in this sense to me, saying that the whole policy was a mistaken one, and deplored the necessity of spending, on war operations, money so sorely needed for other and better purposes. He even asked me if it was not Mr. Balfour who had suggested to the Russian Government the lease of Port Arthur! I replied that although during the time I had lived in Russia I had heard many accusations against the British Government, it was the first time I had heard of the lease of Port Arthur being laid at the door of His Majesty's Government. At the same time the war was being utilized as a formidable weapon by the revolutionary party to spread discontent with the system of autocratic government. The internal situation was slowly but surely deteriorating, socialism was gradually spreading amongst the working classes, whilst even amongst the better-educated Russians it was felt that some change was necessary in the system of government which had permitted the country to be plunged into a costly and disastrous war in pursuit of a policy disapproved by some of the most prominent members of the Government and provoked by concession hunters of doubtful reputation. Even the landed

ASSASSINATION OF PLEHVE

proprietors were beginning to be unsettled by the strain of war. Their workmen and horses were taken and their taxes were doubled, while the families of men taken for military service were left upon the hands of the landlords to support.

The assassination of General Bobrikoff, Governor of Finland, in the Finnish Senate on the 16th June, added one more to the long list of political murders in Russia during those years. The reactionary measures of the Russian Government during the previous five years in their efforts to reduce that province to a position of homogeneity with the rest of the Empire and to deprive the Grand Duchy of the constitutional privileges which the Finnish people had hitherto enjoyed, had converted Finland from a loyal province into the canker spot of Russia.

Only six weeks later, on the 28th July 1904, M. Plehve, Minister of the Interior, on his way to the station to proceed to Tsarskoe Selo for his weekly audience of the Emperor, was killed by a bomb thrown at him in the street. Owing to the congestion of traffic his carriage had to pull up where a small bridge crossed a canal, and an individual ran out from an adjacent cabaret and threw a bomb beneath the carriage. The carriage was blown to atoms and both M. Plehve and the coachman killed. An English gentleman of my acquaintance happened to pass by shortly after the event and described to me how he found the street full of gendarmes and saw pools of blood and a heap lying on the ground covered by a military cloak. On asking what the heap was, he was told that it was the body of the Minister of the Interior.

The assassination came as a disagreeable shock but made no impression whatever. So many Ministers had been assassinated within the previous three years that the public seemed to be no longer impressed by the horror of such events, and with that resignation peculiar to Russians and inspired by their inherent fatalism, they merely remarked that it was "the act of God" or that "it was his turn".

Curiously enough, an Irish professor, in close touch with the anarchists, came to see me less than twenty-four hours before the murder took place, and after recounting the incidents of the persecution by M. Plehve's orders of a lady of education on a false accusation, remarked to me that M. Plehve would not have to wait long for the fate which befell him so very soon afterwards. I have always wondered how much he had known of the anarchists' plans.

It was about this time that all my troubles with the Russian Govern-

ment over our merchant shipping began. The beginning of the trouble was due to their declaration that coal was unconditional contraband of war. This created a storm of protest in England, but in one sense it was fortunate since it justified us in notifying to the Russian Government the natural consequence that we could not therefore allow the ships of the Baltic Fleet which were preparing to leave the Russian ports to coal in British harbours, a decision which was far more prejudicial to Russia than to English trade. Simultaneously news arrived that two ships of the Russian Volunteer Commercial Fleet, the *Petersburg* and *Smolensk*, had passed from the Black Sea, through the Dardanelles and the Suez Canal, as merchant vessels and on arrival in the Red Sea had hoisted the naval flag and commenced molesting and seizing British and neutral shipping. There was a loud outcry and much excitement in England over this arbitrary and illegal proceeding, and I made very strong representations to Count Lamsdorff on the seizure of the *Malacca*, a P. & O. steamer bound for the Far East and carrying a supply of munitions for the arsenal at Hong Kong. Threats were made in the English Press that the *Malacca* would be released by force and the situation became critical. The passage of the *Malacca* as a prize of war, through the Suez Canal under the Russian flag, still further increased the irritation. Finally, after much discussion and the threat that the British Government would be forced to take such measures as might be necessary to prevent the recurrence of such incidents in future, the *Malacca* was released at Suda Bay, and orders were sent that no more captures should be made by the Russian cruisers and that they were to withdraw homewards. Owing to the secret opposition of the Russian Admiralty and by order of the Grand Duke Alexander Michailovitch, the orders never reached their destination and further captures were made of British ships which I insisted should be annulled, and finally I had myself to telegraph the orders to Cape Town which were conveyed by British cruisers to the Russian ships in question.

There were further cases of seizures in the Pacific under illegal conditions which gave rise to much dispute and discussion, but the case which excited the greatest controversy was that of the *Knight Commander* which was sunk at sea by a Russian cruiser without being brought before a Russian prize court, the sinking being legalized by a Russian prize court after the event. After long and repeated discussions in which Count Lamsdorff, under great difficulties at the hands of the Admiralty and the Naval Grand Dukes, was always friendly and conciliatory, I succeeded in obtaining

the issue of orders against the sinking of any more British merchant vessels by Russian cruisers.

During the month of July 1904 the Japanese were slowly closing in round Port Arthur. After five months of war the Russians had had nothing but defeats. They were driven out of a fortified position at Tasichau, they were turned out of Newchang and were in full retreat on Liao Yang and Mukden. Nevertheless, confidence in ultimate victory remained paramount. Without recovery of the command of the sea, victory was, however, impossible. The Russians grasped this fact too late, and made feverish haste in preparing to despatch the Baltic Fleet to Far-Eastern waters.

On the 11th August 1904 the Russian Fleet made a bolt from Port Arthur, the fact being that the Japanese had made it too hot for them to remain. It was said that seventeen shells fell on the battleship *Retirsan*. The fleet scattered and made for different neutral harbours where they were disarmed and interned, the *Retirsan* and *Pobieda* being alone forced to put back into Port Arthur.

It was at the beginning of August 1904 that the British expedition to Lhasa reached its goal, and this news did not add pleasurable feelings to the Russians, but relying on the assurances we gave, public opinion accepted the fact fairly well. It was however impossible to disabuse them of the view that we had seized the moment of Russia's weakness to send an expedition to Thibet with the view of destroying Russian influence in the heart of Asia. The eventual withdrawal of our troops produced a good effect and helped to restore friendly feelings.

In the early morning of August 12th 1904, a thundering salute of 101 guns announced the birth of an heir to the Emperor of Russia. Although the event should have been one of great joy to all Russians, people seemed indifferent and showed no enthusiasm. The Grand Duke Michael, the Emperor's brother, and till then heir apparent, received the news with great joy. Twelve days later the christening of the Cesarevitch took place in the Chapel of the Palace at Peterhof. The ceremony was carried out with great pomp. Prince Louis of Battenberg came specially to represent the King, who was one of the godfathers, the German Emperor and the King of Denmark being the others. The service was interminable, lasting three hours, since, after the christening, the Holy Communion was administered. The baby was dipped three times in the font with the fingers of the priest in his nostrils and mouth and he was then invested

with the ribbon and insignia of the Order of St. Andrew in diamonds. The whole of the Imperial Family was present. It was a most tiring function as the Ambassadors and Heads of Mission had to stand the whole time. The luncheon afterwards was a great relief. It was at this function that the notorious Rasputin made almost his first appearance as a priest in public. It was also the first time that I saw and met the princess, daughter of Princess Anastasia, who eventually became German Crown Princess.

This was the first and only occasion that I saw that horrible man, Rasputin. The history of his presence at Court was a curious one. It was in 1901 that an announcement was made by the Russian Court physicians that the Empress was enceinte and an approximate date for her accouchement was given. The whole of Russia was in a state of excitement on the approach of the date, hoping that an heir to the throne would be born. A battery of artillery was stationed permanently outside the Winter Palace to salute and announce the birth of a child. One month and two months passed and nothing happened. There was much disappointment and talk, and it appeared that such a case was not without precedent in the medical world. Shortly afterwards the Empress met Rasputin, who told her not to despair, and that she would have a son within two years. When this forecast came true, Rasputin was brought to the Court and his position then was assured.

Prince Louis, who held at that time the post of Chief of Naval Intelligence, was of great use to me in explaining to the Emperor and Russian Admiralty the views of His Majesty's Government on questions connected with the seizure of our merchant vessels.

September 1904 was a fairly quiet month, but the besieged Port Arthur was gradually becoming desperate. The Russians were reduced to using black powder and the Japanese refused to allow them to bury their dead. The white flag was fired on by both sides. In the meantime everything went on in St. Petersburg as though no war was in progress. Everybody amused themselves, the theatres, music-halls and restaurants being crowded every night, while dinners were given in society all the time. Lawn tennis and polo prevailed during the summer and shooting parties in the autumn and winter.

In the meanwhile the Anglo-French agreement was signed in June 1904. This was King Edward's triumph. It was destined to prove of the greatest service to me in my difficulties with the Russian Government, which were going to be more serious than ever before.

SECRET POLICE

At the beginning of October 1904, Prince Mirsky was appointed Minister of the Interior in succession to Plehve. A reformer and a charming man, but not of strong character. Much satisfaction at his appointment was expressed on all sides, but the result was naturally to encourage the elements of reform and progress and to raise greater expectations than were likely to be realised.

A great battle was fought with great fierceness round Mukden for several days without definite result, but the Russian losses amounted to 56,000 men.

At this moment a new bureau of the secret police was formed under a certain Manouiloff solely to watch diplomatists. It was a very disgraceful affair and caused me much annoyance. In one Legation they succeeded in effecting an entry and photographing the cyphers. In the Swedish Legation they cut out the back of a despatch box and abstracted papers. In my Embassy they were particularly active. After a dinner party one evening when the servants were closing the rooms after I had just gone to bed, two English and Russian footmen discovered a man under a sofa in the supper room and half killed him with a curtain pole that was lying handy. He was handed over by them to the policeman outside the door of the Embassy in a very battered condition and streaming with blood, but not a word of complaint was raised by the Russian authorities because he was undoubtedly a member of the secret police.

Almost immediately afterwards it was discovered that the lock of the safe in the Chancery in which the cyphers were kept had been tampered with. What the secret police had, however, not foreseen, was that I succeeded in getting personally into touch with one of their own body who kept me informed as to what they were doing. He warned me of the attempt on the safe, and told me that it was with the connivance of our Chancery servant, an Italian. The latter was discharged at once, and he knew better than to ask why. At that time my wife and family were in England and I slept in the state bedroom because it adjoined my study. On two occasions I heard the secret police in my study next door, and my agent in that force sent me a photograph taken by them of a letter to me from the Ambassador in Tokio which they had abstracted from my despatch box, photographed and put back again. There was nothing in the letter. I was glad they had it as it proved to the Government that my correspondence by bag with the Embassy at Tokio was innocuous. Before I left St. Petersburg I gave my secret agent a sum of money to get away

with as his life would otherwise not have been worth much and I heard that he was beginning to be suspected.

As an example of the corruption existing amongst the official classes, I may mention that I was kept extremely well informed of everything that took place in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs by one of the highest officials in that Ministry. He was a gambler like them all.

On the 17th October 1904, the ominous news was received that the Baltic Fleet had sailed from Libau for the Far East in two divisions. It was on the 24th October that telegrams reached St. Petersburg announcing that the Baltic Fleet had fired upon the Hull fishing-fleet on the Dogger Bank in the North Sea, sinking one boat, severely damaging another and killing and wounding several fishermen. I called at once upon Count Lamsdorff, pointed out the gravity of the situation and urged him to make a spontaneous declaration that an inquiry would be held, that full reparation would be given, and that guilty officers would be punished. I failed to get him to move. As I left his room I said to him that the incident was so grave that peace might possibly be jeopardized unless he and I made up our minds that war should not under any circumstances result. We gave each other a mutual promise and shook hands over it.

The following day he came to see me after his audience with the Emperor, bringing a friendly message expressing the Emperor's regret for the loss of life and promising a full inquiry and reparation if necessary. No news having reached the Admiralty from Admiral Rodjestvensky, a fast ship was sent to intercept him at Vigo. Two days later, the 27th October, I was asked to go and see Count Lamsdorff at 10 a.m. and found him in a state of great excitement. He was in evening clothes and quite dishevelled. The politest man in the world was very nearly rude to me. He read me two telegrams from the Russian Admiral stating that the fleet had been attacked by two Japanese torpedo-boats, that there had been connivance on the part of the fishing fleet, and that the Russian Fleet had acted purely in self-defence. These telegrams created an immense revulsion of feeling and those who had been penitent under the accusations levelled against the Baltic Fleet became truculent and aggressive in the rôle of accuser. The reaction was so great that Lamsdorff, like other Russians, lost his head. For a full hour he launched forth in abuse of England, Japan and the perfidy of the Japanese, "*vos chers Alliés*" as he termed them. I took no notice of his attacks, for I realized that he was not himself and that he was in an abnormal state, and I did not attempt

DOGGER BANK INCIDENT

to argue. I said nothing beyond that I would come and see him the following day. But the situation was very critical, for when I went to see him on the 28th October, he literally fell on my neck and with tears in his eyes thanked me for having said nothing to him on the preceding day. He told me that he had been up all night at the Council of Ministers struggling against a most bellicose atmosphere, and that it had been decided he should send for me, should read to me the Admiral's telegrams and speak to me with the utmost frankness about them, and that if I or Lord Lansdowne in any message should utter one word of menace he was to say to me, "Well, you want war, and now you shall have it"! He was really in a pitiable state of repentance, and I seized the opportunity to administer a very severe scolding, and to tell him that it was very disgraceful to make the risk of a long and terrible war between two great countries dependent upon what a single Government official like myself might say or do. He agreed, and I felt that the danger was over for the moment. I pressed hard for an inquiry and happily the Emperor made an identical proposal himself which our Government accepted. It should be remembered that at that moment the Russians were in the position of a man fighting with his back to the wall, and that though they fully realized that war with England would entail the entire destruction of the Russian Fleet, they were ready in their excitable condition to risk anything and to provoke a general conflagration under the impression that nothing could be much worse than their actual position at that time. This state of mind was necessarily full of danger. Negotiations were at once commenced for a convention giving the terms of reference to an International Commission of which the chairman was to be an Austrian admiral.

It was at this moment that the German Emperor endeavoured to bring about a coalition of the three great Continental Powers, France, Germany and Russia, against England; and it was the Kaiser's scheme to present to the French Government a *fait accompli* in a Treaty concluded between Germany and Russia, but this treacherous step on the part of Germany was frustrated by Lamsdorff, who refused to sign the Treaty until the French Government had been informed of its contents. This Germany realized would be a futile and useless step, and the proposal fell through.

On the 30th October I had a private audience of the Emperor of a most friendly nature which lasted for more than an hour, in which every sort of question was discussed. When I told him all that had passed between

Lamsdorff and me and how near we had been to a most serious crisis, his eyes filled with tears and he said that he would never allow a war between England and Russia. It interested me and showed the hostile bias of the Court towards England that on my arrival at the Palace at Tsarskoe Selo I was told by the Court Marshal that the special train which had brought me would return in twenty minutes. I was amused when at the close of my interview the same Court official was told that I was to stay to luncheon ! This interview afforded me immense relief in putting an end to the extreme tension which had lasted a whole fortnight and which nearly wore me out by the anxiety which prevented sleep.

One would have thought that our Government would on their side have done what they could to assist me, but it was not so. Mr. Balfour, the Prime Minister, made an inflammatory speech at Southampton which excited greatly public opinion in Russia, and some days later when the Baltic Fleet left Vigo they were shadowed by the British cruiser squadron from the Channel under Lord C. Beresford at a distance of five miles apart with decks cleared for action. This latter incident took place when negotiations for an agreement were already well on their way. I made a very vigorous protest to Lord Lansdowne against these minatory proceedings and pointed out to him that war with England would present an excuse for patching up peace with Japan and for putting an end to an unpopular war and for making a determined attack upon Afghanistan and India, a much easier and popular proposition than the war in which they were then engaged with Japan. Lord Lansdowne replied regretting that these incidents had made my task more difficult. Finally, on the 25th November, the Convention for an inquiry was signed by Count Lamsdorff and me and the meeting took place in Paris after the New Year, the British Representative being Admiral Sir L. Beaumont and Admiral Kasnakoff, the Russian Representative. It may be mentioned that the story of the Japanese torpedo-boats was implicitly credited in Russia and no argument would convince anybody that it was not so. I may here add that the result of the Court of Inquiry proved that there were not, and never had been, any Japanese torpedo-boats in the North Sea, but the inquiry served to mark time while passions cooled and a serious danger was definitely averted.

After the signature of the agreement I received many flattering messages from the King and Lord Lansdowne. The former expressed his pleasure at my having had the courage to point out the danger that was being incurred

by the naval measures that were being taken, and that he had decided to confer the G.C.M.G. upon me at the New Year.

An interesting development occurred at this moment in the meeting at St. Petersburg of the Presidents of thirty-two out of thirty-four Zemstvos when a programme of far-reaching reforms involving a Russian constitution was discussed and unanimously accepted. It was submitted to the Emperor who gave temporizing replies. The matter was serious and involved a choice between agitation and disturbances or a basic remodelling of the autocracy. The Presidents returned to the provinces determined to keep up the agitation. A few weeks later an Imperial Ukase was issued, promising certain reforms. Nevertheless the reform movement continued to spread in every direction by leaps and bounds. Everybody was clamouring for reforms and at meetings impassioned demands for them were made. The Grand Duke Serge, Governor of Moscow and a strong reactionary, summoned a meeting of provincial Marshals of Nobility with a view to passing resolutions hostile to the Zemstvos, but his resolutions were thrown out and others passed demanding reforms. The Grand Duke appealed twice to the Emperor, who sent evasive replies, and finally sent in his resignation, which was not accepted.

On December 11th the first serious disturbance occurred, this time in the Nevsky. The Cossacks charged the crowd and sabred a good many. The yards adjoining the streets were full of wounded men.

At the New Year I received a very flattering letter from Lord Lansdowne announcing my appointment to the G.C.M.G., and a charming telegram from the King in the following words: "Nobody deserves New Year honour more than yourself."

It was towards the end of 1904 that the question was raised in the Press of the despatch of the Black Sea Fleet to join the Baltic Fleet which had just passed through the Suez Canal. It was realized that such a move constituting a breach of the Treaty of Paris of 1856 might provoke war with England, but nevertheless the agitation was encouraged by the Russian Admiralty. I was instructed by the Foreign Office to speak very plainly to Lamsdorff on the subject, but I refrained from doing so as I knew that he would also not relish the idea of a breach of treaty which might provoke war. I took, however, a step which answered admirably. I sent an official despatch by post to the Consul-General at Odessa, instructing him to report to me by telegraph any preparations indicating naval movements and explaining that in the event of the Black Sea Fleet issuing into the Ægean Sea from the

Black Sea it would be immediately met and driven back by the Mediterranean Fleet. I have no doubt that this letter was opened in the post as all my others were opened and its contents given to the Government, for nothing more was heard of the question. I was glad that I had said nothing to Lamsdorff.

The year 1905 opened badly for Russia. It was on the 2nd January that the news first reached St. Petersburg of the fall of Port Arthur. The news was at first suppressed and then gradually let out. It produced a great effect amongst the lower classes, who had been completely deceived by the optimistic reports sent by General Stoessel. It transpired that the real hero of the defence of Port Arthur was General Kondratchenko, who was killed in a casemate two days before the surrender. It appeared that General Kondratchenko threatened General Stoessel that he would shoot him if he surrendered, and General Stoessel seized the first opportunity after his death to do so. Stoessel was allowed to come home on parole, but he was tried by court martial and condemned to several years' imprisonment in a fortress. The fall of Port Arthur raised the question of the further progress of the Baltic Fleet which was then at Madagascar, but it was decided that it should continue its voyage to the Far East. The question of peace was also raised for the first time, but public opinion was in general opposed to it until Russia had secured some signal victory.

A fortnight later, the 19th January 1905, the ceremony of blessing the waters took place. The Corps Diplomatique, who had been invited, saw the function from the windows in the Winter Palace. At the conclusion of the religious ceremony the Emperor was inspecting the marine cadets when a salute was fired. The first gun made an unusual report and I noticed the staff of the standard held by a cadet snap in two just as the Emperor was passing. At the same time two or three grape-shot passed through the windows from which we were looking, and having struck the walls were picked up in the room. The Emperor showed the greatest coolness, spoke a few words to the standard bearer and continued the inspection. After the luncheon which followed, I had a few minutes' conversation with the Emperor who, in speaking of the war, made the strange remark to me that there might still be some reverses, and that after them all would go well.

Later in the afternoon, I walked out on the frozen Neva and noticed that the Kiosque where the religious service had taken place was bespattered with bullet marks, as also the walls of the Palace. I found also a large

mark on the ice where evidently the case shot had ricocheted probably owing to the charge of powder not being sufficiently strong.

An inquiry was held and the battery was disbanded, the men and officers being distributed amongst regiments in Manchuria.

Three days later the tragedy of Red Sunday occurred. At several of the industrial works in St. Petersburg the men were on strike. The beginning was at the Putiloff works where 13,000 men went out. This was followed by strikes at all the other factories, so that on the eve of Red Sunday there were about 100,000 men on strike. Their demands were, at first, purely industrial. They asked for an eight-hour day and a minimum wage of one rouble per diem. Their leader was Father Gapon, a priest who united with his priestly duties that of President of the Workmen's Union. In conjunction with the revolutionary party a petition was drawn up for presentation to the Emperor. A delegation went to Tsarskoe Selo to ask the Emperor to receive the petition, but no reply was given. A deputation of liberal-minded people called on several Ministers and begged them either to take steps for the petition to be received or to grant concessions to the workmen in order to prevent a possible effusion of blood, but they refused to do anything.

It was a lovely Sunday morning, and as I drove along the Quay to church I saw the strikers streaming across the bridges in great numbers in their best Sunday clothes. I walked back from church and saw large bodies of cavalry shepherding the crowds and preventing their blocking the entrances to the Winter Palace. Just as I got to the Embassy about one o'clock, the soldiers began to try to prevent the strikers coming over the Troitzka Bridge, just in front of the Embassy, and as the crowds continued to collect, I could see from the windows the soldiers firing into the crowd. This was the first blood that was shed. Two hours later, there being dense crowds of strikers so tightly packed in the streets adjoining the Palace that they could not disperse even if they wanted to, the order was given to fire upon the crowd and a great number were killed and wounded, amongst the victims being many women and children. It was a tragic affair, most of the men standing in the street with their hats off, for fear that the "Little Father" might look from the windows and see them with their hats on. The troops fired at a distance of about twenty yards and consequently every bullet killed or wounded two or three people. Some girls who had got up into the trees were brought down. Firing went on more or less all over the town till midnight and a fair estimate was that about 300 were killed

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and about 1,000 wounded. There were no disorders afterwards and the troops remained encamped in the town. The Emperor was at Tsarskoe Selo and knew nothing of what was in progress. Had he come to St. Petersburg and shown himself on a balcony of the palace the enthusiasm would have been intense. The crowd was peaceful and harmless and no provocation was given. He missed the chance of his life, for had he then conceded what was immediately afterwards promised in his name, he would have obtained the undying admiration and loyalty of his subjects. He realized this when it was too late. As it was, a gulf was created between the Emperor and his people and the story was spread that when his subjects came to present their grievances to the "Little Father" they were mowed down by his troops. A fortnight later the Emperor received a deputation of thirty-four workmen and conversed with them, but it was too late then. Nobody ever knew the ultimate fate of Father Gapon. He disappeared and it was said that he had been killed either by the police or by the soldiers.

Responsibility for the orders to fire on the crowd was attributed to the Grand Duke Vladimir. But the real culprit was Prince Vassiltchikoff, who commanded the Guards Division, was there on the spot, and himself gave the order to fire. When the Grand Duke, who was in his palace, heard of the firing, he sent his senior A.D.C. to stop it, but Prince Vassiltchikoff refused to obey, saying he could not be responsible for the safety of his troops or of the town unless they used their arms. This I know to be true.

The Minister of the Interior and the Prefect of Police both resigned and were replaced by the worst kind of reactionaries, the nominees of the Grand Duke Serge.

The troubles in St. Petersburg were followed by outbreaks in Moscow, Riga, Reval, Libau, Kovno, Lodz and Warsaw, all of which were suppressed, in some cases with bloodshed. At Moscow the Prefect of Police placarded the town with a telegram stating that the disorders were caused by English and Japanese gold, and at Warsaw the British Consul-General and Pro-Consul were attacked by soldiers and the latter wounded with two sword-cuts on the face. To the credit of the Russian Government I would add that they allowed my Military Attaché to go to Warsaw and to carry out a complete investigation into this unprovoked attack.

The inevitable result of the repression of strikes by the use of the military was the resort to assassination and on the 17th February the Grand Duke Serge, Governor of Moscow, was killed by a bomb thrown at his carriage.

RUSSIAN DEFEAT

The Grand Duchess, who was loved in Moscow as much as her husband was hated, was almost the first to reach the remains of her husband which presented a most awful sight. Curiously enough, she went later to the assassin's cell and spent half an hour with him.

In the meantime the whole country was seething and demanding reforms. All that happened was the issue of a most reactionary Imperial manifesto which produced the worst possible impression, followed by a rescript of the Emperor promising a National Assembly which should be the first step towards some sort of constitutional Government. The issue of this rescript was due to the realization of the injurious effect produced by the publication of the manifesto and is one more example of the vacillation of the Emperor's policy.

Almost immediately with these internal troubles the Russian Army experienced a very serious defeat at Mukden and the Russian Government had arrived at a stage where they appeared to be able neither to wage war nor to make peace. Rumours of peace began to spread in the spring, but without any solid foundation. The military authorities were experiencing difficulties in finding men and munitions, though they were receiving help from Germany, through an agreement permitting Russia to withdraw her troops from the German frontier, and from arms and munitions supplied by Krupp's firm. But the peace movement was growing and the one stumbling-block was the fear of a demand by Japan of a war indemnity which it was felt a Great Power like Russia could not, with any sense of dignity, pay.

Towards the end of April 1905 I went home on four weeks' leave for rest, but my principal object was to urge upon Lord Lansdowne, as strongly as I possibly could, the very great importance and advantage to British interests to strengthen our alliance with Japan, as was then under consideration. I pointed out when I got home that the best and surest way of coming to terms with Russia after the war would be by making an agreement with Japan which Russia would recognize as making impossible any aggressive action against British interests in Asia. I am glad to say that my representations carried some weight.

During my stay in England the King was very kind to me and invited me to stay at Sandringham. I returned to St. Petersburg on the 29th May.

A few days after my return the news reached St. Petersburg of the complete destruction of the Baltic Fleet at Tschushima. I had the news at once, but kept it to myself, and it was very interesting to watch how

it was held back and then gradually divulged. Humiliation and despair were general and Society in St. Petersburg was touched by the war for the first time, since only a very few officers of the garrison had volunteered for service in Manchuria, while the fleet was full of young men from the greatest families in Russia. The officers of the battleship *Alexander III*, which was sunk with all hands, were the *élite* of the Russian nobility. The Government and chief officials, with the exception of some of the military party, were in consequence all the more opposed to the continuation of hostilities, but the Emperor was still opposed to peace and was always counting on a change of fortune at the eleventh hour of the war. Happily a change in the situation occurred a few weeks later when President Roosevelt made proposals to put an end to the war by the conclusion of peace and an agreement was arrived at between Russia and Japan to enter into negotiations at Portsmouth in the United States. These proposals were accepted by Russia in a very supercilious manner, implying that Russia did not really want peace and was ready to go on indefinitely with the war: M. Witte was appointed Chief Russian Plenipotentiary.

Meanwhile there was little change in the internal situation and strikes, murders of officials, and local disorders were prevalent everywhere throughout Russia. The creation of a National Assembly was much discussed without any real progress being made. The urgency of the matter was never realized until the end of August, when the creation of a National Assembly was announced by the Emperor in a manifesto. It was generally received with great joy.

It was in August 1905 that I heard of the conclusion of our new Treaty of Alliance with Japan, at which I was greatly pleased. It was secret, but I urged that it should be communicated to the Russian Government as soon as it was possible to do so. It was purely defensive and contained no clause to which any Power without aggressive intentions could justifiably take exception. I heard later, however, that the Treaty had made an unfavourable impression in Russian Government circles, since the weapon of offence forged with so much care for use in Central Asia had thereby lost its edge, or as a newspaper naïvely put it, "the sword of Damocles is no longer suspended over England in India". Russian ill-humour over the Treaty was not long lived.

The Russo-Japanese negotiations made unexpectedly rapid progress at Portsmouth. The one difficult point was the demand of the Japanese for a war indemnity upon which the Russian Government were absolutely

TREATY OF PORTSMOUTH

decided not to yield, and they were encouraged in this policy by the fantastic accounts of the extraordinary efficiency and condition of the Russian Army at the front. There is no doubt that the Emperor did not want peace and still hoped for victory in the event of a resumption of hostilities. During the night preceding the morning sitting when peace was provisionally concluded, Witte received a telegram from the Emperor in these words, "Finish and come home at once". At 8 a.m. Witte held a conference with his colleague Baron Rosen and they agreed that the meaning of the telegram was that they should break off negotiations, but Witte decided not to undertake the responsibility of a breach, being confident that the Japanese would create a rupture by insisting upon an indemnity. A telegram in English was even prepared to be sent to the Emperor explaining the failure on those grounds. When, however, at the morning sitting the Japanese waived the only outstanding claim, viz. that of an indemnity, the Treaty was complete and Witte could do nothing else but sign. The Emperor sent no reply to Witte's telegram announcing the conclusion of peace, but two or three days later a telegram reached Witte from the Emperor telling him to seek a pretext to prevent the final conclusion of peace. Witte, considering that this would place Russia in a very false position, ignored his instructions.

Confirmation of the Emperor's attitude was given only a few days later by both the Emperor and the Empress to Colonel Waters, who was received in audience on his return from the front. They both expressed annoyance at the conclusion of peace when the Russian Army was in such a splendid position, and the Emperor spoke excitedly of the cunning of the Japanese in having renounced the indemnity and said that he had been tricked into giving up half of the island of Sakhalin.

It was a great relief to me when peace was concluded, for I was well aware that, although there was a position of stalemate on the front, neither army being able to move, Japan was at the end of her tether both in men, munitions and money, and it would have been impossible for her to prolong her resistance for more than a few months. On the other hand, Russia would very probably have been crippled by deterioration in the internal situation and by the unpopularity of the war. The victory of Japan was of supreme advantage to British policy, for it closed the chapter of Russian aggression in Asia.

In October of that year there was quite an interesting little intrigue manœuvred by the Kaiser which met with a dismal failure. Although I

was aware that something of the kind was in progress it was only later that I learnt what had really happened. It appears that the Kaiser met the Emperor Nicolas when yachting in the Gulf of Finland and, in the absence of the Foreign Minister of either sovereign, persuaded the Emperor to sign a Treaty of Alliance between Russia and Germany to which France was to be invited to be a party, and which was practically an anti-English coalition, suggested as an offset to the Anglo-Japanese Treaty recently concluded, but intended in reality to break up the Russo-French alliance and to serve as a weapon against England. Witte, who had been greatly flattered in Berlin on his return from Portsmouth, was much in favour of the Treaty and made no secret of his views, but happily the proposal was rejected by the French Government in the most uncompromising manner. Count Lamsdorff was even still more opposed to the proposal for an anti-British coalition since his own removal from office was one item of the German programme. It is interesting to note that Tchirsky, the evil genius of German diplomacy, was in attendance upon the Kaiser on this occasion.

Some excitement was caused in Petersburg Society over the exile of the Grand Duke Cyril as a punishment by the Emperor for having married, in spite of his veto, the former Grand Duchess of Hesse.

Before going on leave to England at the end of October, which I had to do by sea owing to a general strike on the railways, I had an interview with the Emperor in which he asked me to transmit the most friendly messages to the King and to give His Majesty the assurance that he could absolutely rely upon him. This was hardly in accord with what I have just related above, but I honestly believe that the Emperor never understood what the proposed Treaty implied. I little realized then that my mission as Ambassador to St. Petersburg was practically over.

When I reached home I found that the question agitating the Foreign Office was the succession to Lord Sanderson, who was due to retire on the following 1st February, having reached the age of 65, and was suffering at the same time from his eyesight. I was spoken of, but with my knowledge of what the position entailed I was not very enthusiastic over the idea, though I did not turn it down, for although it entailed heavy pecuniary sacrifices upon me I had always realized that the only way to get on in the service was to disregard material advantages and to seek only for power. To be Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office was undoubtedly to wield power. But the factor which decided me to accept the post was the wish expressed by King Edward that I should do so, His Majesty having

nvited me to Sandringham for the celebration of his birthday and to express to me his wishes. His Majesty also conferred upon me the G.C.V.O. in recognition of my services at St. Petersburg. I therefore definitely accepted the post of Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office. I realized that the position would be somewhat difficult for me in view of the fact that I was much junior in service and years to the other Under-Secretaries, and I urged that a good post abroad should be found for Sir F. Villiers, who was aspiring to the post to which I had been named, but was ignorant of the fact of my appointment.

At the beginning of January 1906 I returned to St. Petersburg to pack up my effects and to take leave of the Emperor and of my many friends in the Russian capital. Without boasting, I think that they were very sorry that I was leaving the Embassy, perhaps Count Lamsdorff more than anybody else. I had, however, the satisfaction of feeling that everybody recognized that I was leaving Anglo-Russian relations in a far better state than when I arrived two years earlier. I do not pretend for a moment that this was owing to me, but it was in my opinion due to the recognition of the dignity and impartiality with which the British Government had faithfully discharged their obligations of neutrality not only towards Russia but also towards their Japanese Allies. The loyalty of our Government towards that of France in the Morocco incident sprung upon the world by the Kaiser as a sequence to the Anglo-French agreement of 1904 served as a useful object lesson which had considerable effect, and there is no denying the fact that at the moment of my leaving Russia the bitter hostility of the Press towards England had disappeared and relations between the two countries were more friendly than since the beginning of the war.

At the end of 1905 there was a change of Government and Sir E. Grey became Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. During the farewell audience given me by the Emperor I was able to assure His Majesty of the friendly attitude of the new Government towards Russia, and when expressing regret at my approaching departure from St. Petersburg, he added that he was consoled by the thought that Russia would gain in me a warm advocate of friendly relations between the two countries. I assured the Emperor that one of my reasons for accepting the post in the Foreign Office was that I realized that in my new position I would be more likely to be able to do something to realize my hope of an Anglo-Russian agreement than if I were to remain Ambassador in St. Petersburg. The Emperor never

forgot those words as he brought them up again in conversation with me two years later at Cowes. On leaving he presented me with a diamond and enamel snuff-box as a souvenir of my stay in Russia.

During the two years that I had been Ambassador at St. Petersburg I was very fortunate in having Spring Rice (later Sir C. Spring Rice, Ambassador in Washington) as my First Secretary. He was very clever and amusing and a pessimist which had a good effect in moderating my optimism. I was much indebted to him for the information he used to procure for me. He was married to the daughter of Sir F. Lascelles, Ambassador in Berlin during this time, and I was greatly amused by the fact that, on the German papers writing to ask for his photograph to publish in the Press in connection with his marriage, he sent a photograph of Ronald Lindsay, a very good-looking Secretary of the Embassy, which was duly published over his name.

During my stay at the Embassy there were no Court functions, such as balls, concerts or parties, but a good deal of private entertaining such as dinners, etc. The Russians, in spite of their suspicions of British policy, were very hospitable to us and their society was extremely pleasant. I have very warm and appreciative remembrances of their kindness and hospitality. Each autumn I did a good deal of shooting which I always enjoyed, generally on the invitation of the Grand Duke Vladimir. In the summer I managed to get away some week-ends for fishing in Finland, but it was difficult while the war was in progress.

Those two years synchronized with the presence in St. Petersburg of four foreign diplomatists, all of whom I knew well, who were largely responsible for the Great War of 1914. These were Baron d'Aehrenthal, Austrian Ambassador, who became Minister for Foreign Affairs in Vienna in 1906 and was directly responsible for the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908, which was indirectly the cause of the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand at Serajevo in June 1914. He, happily for him, died before the outbreak of the War. Count Forgach was the Secretary of the Austrian Embassy, who presented the ultimatum to the Servian Government in 1914. Count Berchtold, then Councillor in the Austrian Embassy, was later the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, who declared war on France in 1914. There was also Tchirsky, Councillor of the German Embassy, a very sinister individual who was Ambassador in Vienna at the outbreak of war, and at that moment used all his influence to frustrate Sir E. Grey's efforts for mediation between the Austrian and Servian

TCHIRSKY

Governments. He was by far the worst of the four, and I have always felt that he was egged on by his hatred of the Russians, owing to his withdrawal from St. Petersburg at the demand of the Russian Government on account of his rudeness and lack of manners at a Court function.

CHAPTER X

L O N D O N , 1 9 0 6

AS I have already stated there was a change of Government at home in December 1905 and Sir E. Grey became Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. For me this was a very fortunate and happy coincidence with my appointment to the Foreign Office, for I knew from my experience as Assistant Under-Secretary in 1903 that Lord Lansdowne, who was always very kind to me, was not an easy Chief to serve owing to his very reserved nature, while Sir E. Grey, who was a few years younger than myself, was the exact reverse in every way. With him I was able to discuss everything with the utmost freedom, more as two equals than as Chief and subordinate, and he allowed me the greatest liberty of action. Had it not been for the complete absence in him of any feelings of petty jealousy, my relations with the King during the following years would have been a source of difficulty between us. I always look back to those five years of work and co-operation between Sir E. Grey and myself as five of the most fruitful and happiest years of my life. They were ceaseless sunshine without a shadow.

I took up my post at the Foreign Office on the 1st February 1906 and it was during the afternoon of that day that news arrived of a carriage accident to Lady Grey in Northumberland from which she died two or three days later. I knew her only slightly, but enough to recognize her charm and ability. Poor Sir E. Grey was broken-hearted.

The Foreign Ambassadors gave me a very warm welcome at the Foreign Office with the exception of Count Metternich, the German Ambassador, who had previously attempted, when my appointment was under discussion, to dissuade Lord Lansdowne from it. He suspected me, and rightly so, of opposition to Germany's aggressive policy and his attitude to me was always one of veiled hostility.

The first question of pressing importance in the early part of 1906 was that of Morocco and the Conference at Algeiras. Owing to the conflict

of French and German interests in Morocco, instigated largely by the German Emperor after his visit to Tangier, the Powers had agreed that an International Conference was necessary to settle conflicting claims. It was only three years later, in 1909, that I learnt from a member of the German Foreign Office that the hostile attitude adopted by Germany towards France in Morocco was due to the fact that within a year before the conclusion of the Anglo-French Agreement of 1904, the French Government had approached the German Government with direct proposals for the negotiation of an agreement relating to Morocco. These proposals had not been rejected, and it was therefore felt to be an insult when an Anglo-French agreement was concluded in which Germany had been entirely ignored. If true, this was intelligible. The Conference met at Algeciras in February and Sir A. Nicolson,¹ formerly Minister in Tangier, was British Representative. At first the Conference went badly owing to the extreme demands made by the German Representative at the instigation of the German Emperor, which were quite unacceptable to the French and Spanish Governments. A sudden *volte-face*, however, occurred owing to pressure from President Roosevelt, who reminded the Kaiser that he had promised to accept any solution of the Moroccan question which he might consider just and reasonable. The President insisted that in his opinion the French proposals, with a slight modification relating to the establishment of neutral police, were acceptable, and he held the German Emperor to his promise. The result was instantaneous, and the British Government exerted pressure on the French Government to take advantage of the concessions offered by Germany, since otherwise France and England would be placed in a false and invidious position. The French obstinately refused at first, but gave way eventually. This was a very good example of the advantage of showing firm resistance to German bluff, while it showed up the unpractical character of the French in struggling for an abstract idea and in trying to grasp the shadow while neglecting the substance of German concessions. The Germans, in their usual way, tried to create discord by spreading rumours in the capitals of Europe, that England had made an agreement with Germany behind the backs of the French, but Grey had no difficulty in dispelling this illusion. Finally, agreement was reached, a Treaty was concluded which governed the situation in Morocco for the next seventeen years.

In April 1906 the King started on a cruise in the Mediterranean, and by agreement with Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman I accompanied H.M. as

¹ Afterwards Lord Carnock.

Minister in Attendance, the King claiming that he had a right to take me in that capacity in view of my being an ex-Ambassador and a Privy Councillor. The Prime Minister and Sir E. Grey made no objection whatever, the latter being strongly in favour of the proposal, which was in great contrast to the attitude of Lord Lansdowne in 1903. Nevertheless, the fact was criticized by constitutionalists, since, although I fully represented the Foreign Office, I had not the responsibility of a Member of the Cabinet. I was however fully trusted both by Campbell-Bannerman's and Asquith's Governments.

The Royal yacht *Victoria and Albert* left Marseilles on the 2nd April with the King and Queen and Princess Victoria on board, and sailed for Malta, where two or three days were spent quietly.

From Malta the King went to Corfu to meet the Prince of Wales on his return from his tour in India and the King of Greece who was to be on board his own yacht. Five days were spent at Corfu in the most lovely weather and in perfect surroundings. Corfu is certainly a most beautiful island and it was interesting to note the remains of the British occupation more than fifty years before, which even the want of care and slovenliness of the Greeks had been unable to destroy. We visited the German Emperor's villa and were not impressed by the internal decorations and arrangements. Lord Charles Beresford was present with the battleship squadron of the Mediterranean Fleet. There was a tiresome incident raised by the King of Greece who complained that Lord Charles had not received him in full uniform when he paid his official visit to the Admiral on his flagship. The King took it up and made me write and complain to the First Lord of the Admiralty, all of which was tiresome and unpleasant. If it had been anybody else than Lord Charles I doubt if the King would have taken it up.

While at Corfu the Prince of Wales spoke to me of the unsatisfactory state of affairs in Egypt and the attitude of the Khedive towards Lord Cromer, and gave me a memorandum drawn up by Sir A. Bigge¹ on the subject. The Khedive, who continually sent to the King effusive telegrams begging His Majesty to visit Egypt, entertained the idea, of which he made no secret, that Lord Cromer was not personally acceptable to the King and that His Majesty desired his recall. It was perfectly true that the King disliked Lord Cromer, whom he accused of having been discourteous to him more than once when Prince of Wales. I had a long talk with the King on the subject and he did not conceal from me his dislike of Lord Cromer, but I pointed

¹ Afterwards Lord Stamfordham.

out to His Majesty the absolute necessity of supporting Lord Cromer at all costs, and that his brusque manner and want of more courtier-like ways were of infinitesimal importance when questions affecting the safety of the Empire and of Egypt were at stake. The King authorized me to write at once to Lord Cromer and to express to him his complete confidence and his appreciation of his very valuable services rendered to the Empire during twenty-three years in Egypt. I pointed out to the King that this was not enough as the Khedive would not see my letter to Lord Cromer and that it was absolutely necessary to show to him a signal mark of favour which would convince the Khedive of the futility of his efforts to get rid of him, and I suggested that he should bestow upon him the Order of Merit, remarking that Lord Cromer would not be the least worthy of those already enjoying that honour. The King at first objected that the order had been given only to soldiers, sailors, and people of literary or artistic merit. To which I replied that it would be very invidious to exclude the Diplomatic Service from the possibility of receiving this high decoration. The King agreed and finally accepted the idea in a very kindly manner, and the Order of Merit was shortly bestowed on Lord Cromer, to whom I wrote, as authorized, a letter of approval and appreciation. Lord Cromer was entirely satisfied, and being a man of literary tastes, appreciated the honour. He had once, when speaking to me of the Garter, remarked to me that it was immaterial to him whether he had a red or blue riband on his tummy !

From Corfu we went to Athens and paid an official visit to the King. It lasted about five days and, frankly speaking, we none of us enjoyed it except perhaps the Queen, who loved being with her brother.

During my stay at Athens I had long discussions on Cretan affairs with Theotoki, the Prime Minister, Skouzes the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Prince George, High Commissioner of Crete. The situation in the island was very disturbed owing to misgovernment by the Prince. Had Prince George, at the outset of his career in Crete, made up his mind to govern the island in a constitutional manner, the International garrison, with the exception perhaps of a small nucleus, might by then have been already withdrawn. Instead of this the Prince had governed the island in a manner regardless of consequences, as though union with Greece was a foregone conclusion within the following two or three years. Finding his hopes unrealized he had thrown himself into the strife of party politics and had persecuted the opposition. All these facts I pointed out to the Greek Ministers and Prince George, but at the same time made it clear that although

His Majesty's Government would be ready to agree to some advance in the status of the islands towards the fulfilment of Greek aspirations, it was impossible that the present situation should continue and that a change in the High Commissionership would be desirable. After very careful consideration of all the views put forward I made certain proposals to Sir E. Grey as to the best manner of dealing with the situation in Crete, in which I suggested that he should take the initiative if he approved, in proposing it to the Powers. They tended to the gradual reduction of the International forces and to entrusting to the King of Greece the nomination of a new High Commissioner subject to the approval of the Powers in succession to his son Prince George. These suggestions were accepted by our Government and eventually by the Powers interested.

In the following August I received a letter from the Crown Prince of Greece thanking Sir E. Grey and me on behalf of the King for the arrangement made with the Powers relating to Crete. He added: "I have seen on the spot that if it had not been for you nothing would again have been done, and I am deeply grateful."

From Athens the King went in the yacht to Olympia on the western coast of the Peloponnesus to see the famous statue of Hermes, which I am very glad to have seen, and took leave thereof of the King of Greece. The King and Queen went on to Naples, where they spent a few days, returning later to London. While at Naples we spent a delightful time visiting Pompeii, Herculaneum, Capo di Monte, and making many other most interesting expeditions in perfect weather. The King and Queen evidently enjoyed themselves thoroughly.

In the spring of 1906 negotiations for an agreement with Russia were reopened by conversations between Count Benckendorff, Sir Edward Grey and myself. Count Lamsdorff asked that the British Government should make definite proposals since any emanating from himself would only expose the Government to attack. These conversations made but little progress at the time owing to the resignation of Count Lamsdorff on account of ill-health and partly owing to his feeling that he was not in sympathy with the newly created Duma. Strange though he was, he was a man for whom I had a sincere affection and in whom I reposed great confidence. He was succeeded by M. Isvolsky, whom I had known as Secretary of the Russian Embassy in Washington. He played a very considerable rôle later in Russian politics, but his timidity, amounting almost to cowardice, was his undoing. He was not a very agreeable personality, his vanity being his

outstanding characteristic. He died during the Great War, for which he may be said to have been partly responsible by the provocation he gave to Austria through his unveiled hostility to d'Aehrenthal. He little realized the outcome of the War when at a dinner-party in Paris he declared, "This is *my war, my war!*"

It was about this time that the King appointed my boy Edward as Page of Honour, which post he held till he reached the age limit.

In August the King asked me to accompany His Majesty on his visit to the German Emperor at Cronberg. I joined the King's train at Frankfort on the morning of August 15th and arrived at Cronberg an hour later. The day was spent quietly, the only distraction being a drive through Homburg to an old Roman fort at Salzburg, which the Emperor was in the process of restoring with some stretch of the imagination to what he believed was its original condition.

It was with great pleasure that I met at Cronberg once more, Princess Margaret, the wife of Prince Frederick Charles, and Princess Sophie, Crown Princess of Greece, both sisters of the Emperor, whom I had known quite well and with whom I had played a good deal of tennis at Potsdam when I was Third Secretary in the Embassy at Berlin. They always had been full of fun and they had not lost this, for they laughed with me over the pompous airs of the Kaiser, comparing them with the dignity of King Edward, and asking me whether I did not think their brother absurd! It was not an easy question to answer.

After dinner I had some conversation with Tchirsky, whom I had known as Councillor of the German Embassy in St. Petersburg as specially hostile to England and British interests and who was then holding the post of German Minister for Foreign Affairs. An odious man! who in the dark days of the Boer War preached the necessity of forcing England to make peace with the Boers. The chief topic of conversation was the distrust felt in France towards Germany for which he asked the co-operation of British policy to remove. I pointed out to him that this distrust was not unnatural, especially since the German policy of browbeating appeared to continue even after the removal of M. Delcassé. As regards Anglo-German relations which had undoubtedly improved, I assured him that the improvement would be maintained, provided that there were no more disagreeable surprises such as that of Tangier and no attempt made to injure our relations with France or to thwart our negotiations with Russia. I rubbed in that friendly relations between England and Germany could not be at the

LONDON,

expense of our *entente* with France, but that if they were to exist at all, they must be co-existent with our *entente*.

Almost immediately afterwards I was sent for by the Emperor and had an hour's conversation with His Majesty. He spoke at length on the impending conference at The Hague on military and naval questions and denounced the conference as great nonsense in his opinion, and suggested that the British and German Governments should arrive at a definite agreement on all naval questions before the meeting of the conference. Alluding to disarmament he remarked that Germans only smile when people talk of the reduction of military forces. Ever since the Peace of Tilsit, Germany had been firmly resolved to exist by the strength of her own right arm, and for this an army counting three million more men than that of France had been built up which in case of war would crush France by sheer weight of numbers. He gave me a long exposition of the advantages of militarism to the youth of the country and on its popularity in Germany, and referring to France and her attitude towards Germany described the French nation as a female race and a bundle of nerves, not a male race like the Anglo-Saxons and the Teutons. He maintained that the underlying idea of their policy was that of the *revanche* which they could not obtain for themselves and that that was the explanation of their desire for an *entente* with England and of their alliance with Russia. I pointed out to the Emperor that the fact that Germany was, as he said, in a position to crush France by sheer weight of numbers must be equally well known to statesmen in France and that that would surely be sufficient reason to impel France to seek for outside support. In reply the Emperor assured me of his pacific intentions and that the fears of France were absolutely without foundation. His sole aim and policy were to find commercial outlets for the ever-increasing population of Germany.

His Majesty then enlarged upon the steps which had led up to obtaining the base of Kiao-Chao. He said he had inquired of Lord Salisbury as to where he could find an outlet for German enterprise in foreign lands without encroaching on existing British rights. Having received no answer, he repeated his inquiry and received a reply to the effect that Lord Salisbury would see him damned first. He then approached the Emperor of Russia and secured his agreement to the base of Kiao-Chao, where he said German trade and enterprise were flourishing in an extraordinary manner under the Chinese flag and with a Chinese administration. He added that he would be glad to reduce later the number of German troops there.

The Emperor complained that British Ministers frequently visited Paris and Rome, but seldom came to Germany. I could not point out that the attractions of Berlin were very inferior to those of Paris and Rome, but I pacified him with the statement that I knew that Mr. Haldane proposed to visit Berlin very shortly.

My general impression of this visit was that both the Emperor and Tschirsky were very anxious to be on friendly terms with England and that they at last seemed to realize that friendly relations with us could not be at the expense of our *entente* with France.

It was in the autumn of 1906 that the question was raised by the Norwegian Government of obtaining a treaty of guarantee of the neutrality and integrity of Norway to which the four Powers, Russia, Germany, France and Great Britain, should be parties. King Edward, under the inspiration of King Haakon, his son-in-law, and the British Government, were in favour of giving such a guarantee but were compelled to exercise caution in view of the doubtful attitude of Germany. It was considered necessary to consider the position of Sweden and whether it would be possible to guarantee the neutrality of Norway without guaranteeing that of Sweden. The question dragged on till the summer of the following year, when the Russian Government made proposals associating a guarantee of Norway's neutrality with the abrogation of the Treaty of 1856 by which the fortification of the Aland Islands was prohibited. These proposals changed the situation entirely, since to accept them would place Sweden in a more disadvantageous position than that which she occupied at that time. She would be forced to look somewhere for protection, and under the circumstances existing at the time she would naturally have turned to Germany or have become dependent on Russia. This might have brought about a situation which would cause Norway to regret in a few years' time that the assent to her neutrality had been given. A conference of the Powers to consider the question was suggested, but it never took place. The King of Norway was in constant close touch with King Edward on this subject, and King Edward found the position at one time so difficult to explain to his son-in-law that he asked me to draw up a memorandum which he would send him explaining fully the views of His Majesty's Government. This I did, and the question was then allowed to drop. A Treaty was however signed at Christiania on November 2nd, 1907, by the British, French and Norwegian Plenipotentiaries recognizing the integrity of Norway and abrogating the Treaty of 1855.

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It was in September 1906 that the King wrote to me from Rufford Abbey giving his views on moves and promotions in the Diplomatic Service, especially in regard to the Embassy at Washington, which was vacant owing to the recall of Sir Mortimer Durand. I suggested the appointment of Sir Gerard Lowther, to which the King raised the objection of his wife being an American, and in return he suggested Sir George Buchanan on account of the success that Lady Georgina would undoubtedly be in American Society. To this I replied that, although Lady Georgina would be all that the King or anybody else could possibly wish as an Ambassadress, there could be no doubt of the greater ability of Sir Gerard Lowther. The King never waived his objections to the American wife, though he yielded as regards the offer of the Embassy to Sir G. Lowther. For some reason or other the post was not filled by Sir G. Lowther and it was with a feeling of real dismay that I learnt in the following November that the King had put forward to the Prime Minister, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, my name as a candidate for the post. It must be remembered that I had given up the Embassy at St. Petersburg, and only on the preceding 1st of February had assumed the post of Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office at the request of the Government and at a pecuniary sacrifice that I could ill afford. I had bought and furnished a nice house in London and had made every arrangement on the supposition that my position would be fairly permanent as my official title implied. I liked and was very happy in my work with Sir Edward Grey, who was more like a colleague than a chief and with whom I had many sympathies in common. My two boys were at school and to go to Washington would be to separate myself further from them than when I was at St. Petersburg. I knew Washington, I realized the cost of living there, the inadequacy of the salary, and the difficulties of the post. To be a good speaker was, I knew, an essential to success, and I realized my own deficiency in that respect. Finally, after nine months in the Foreign Office I had grown interested and attached to the work, I had many schemes in hand to make the Foreign Office more efficient, and I felt that there was a policy to pursue towards a Russian agreement which I regarded as of supreme importance to the country and which I believed with perhaps some justice that I could pilot to a successful issue better than almost anybody else. Was it surprising that I jibbed at the idea?

The proposal was made to the Prime Minister by the King in a letter dated the 20th November. It was couched in the most flattering terms as regards myself and conveyed the suggestion that in the event of my appoint-

WASHINGTON EMBASSY

ment to Washington being approved by the Government, a peerage should be conferred upon me. I may here state that a peerage was the very last thing that I desired at that time. The Prime Minister promised to refer the matter to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Sir E. Grey replied by letter on the 21st, emphasizing that what the King wished "would be the very best arrangement for Washington" but what would be gained there would be lost at the Foreign Office. He added "the arrangement has been such a success that I now consider him invaluable where he is, and he really cannot be spared from his present place".

The King wrote again to the Prime Minister on the 23rd, urging my appointment to Washington and pointing out that if I went there for only two years I might then be succeeded by Sir Cecil Spring Rice, who was at that time Minister in Tehran. He again recommended the bestowal of a peerage as some compensation for my disturbance and concluded his letter by stating: "German influence and, indeed, successful intrigue, has been so paramount at Washington, that it wants the ability and diplomatic tact and knowledge possessed by Sir Charles, to counteract the first which is so important for the maintenance of our good relations with the United States Government and the peace of the world."

I am afraid that I was unmoved by this very complimentary reference by the King, my objections being insurmountable. The Prime Minister sent for me on receipt of this letter to discuss the matter with me. He was charming and did not press me at all, and at the close of our conversation said that I had better myself explain my objections to the King. I therefore telegraphed to Lord Knollys to ask if I might have the honour of an interview with the King who had in the meantime moved to Sandringham. I received an invitation to stay a night there. I saw the King before dinner and had a long conversation with His Majesty, who accepted my views and made no difficulties whatever, remarking that he would be very glad to keep me near at hand and at the Foreign Office. He then asked me if I could make any suggestion as to how the Embassy at Washington should be filled, and I had to admit that I could think of no one at the moment, but that I would try very hard to find a suggestion. He told me that if I could think of anybody before I left Sandringham next morning I was to ask for an interview and he would see me.

I racked my brain that night to find a suitable new Ambassador for Washington and in the small hours of the morning a brainwave reached

me and I thought of Bryce. I knew him well as a man full of vitality, though within a year of seventy, the limit of age for the Diplomatic Service, and I realized that he would be greatly appreciated in America as knowing far more of the history and Constitution of America than most Americans. He also had the quality of liking to make long and rather dull speeches on commonplace subjects which I knew to be a trait that would be popular with the American masses. He had also a charming and agreeable wife. I felt therefore that I was on safe ground in putting forward his name to the King as a possible candidate, but I had no idea as to whether the proposal would be acceptable to Bryce. I asked next morning to be received by the King, who was enchanted at my suggestion and said that he would himself put forward Bryce's name to the Prime Minister but that I was not on any account to let out that the suggestion had been made in the first instance by myself. I cordially agreed and was only too pleased that my candidature had been withdrawn. I kept my promise to the King.

The Prime Minister and Grey had, however, other ideas, for they decided to approach Lord Rosebery and to ask him to accept the post for a short term of years. Of course he would have been an ideal Ambassador to Washington, but he hesitated on receiving Sir E. Grey's proposal and a second letter followed by an interview failed to persuade him. On the failure of this negotiation the offer was made to Mr. Bryce, who accepted with enthusiasm and held the post for several years to the great satisfaction of the American and British Governments. I always pride myself on having suggested almost the best appointment that has been made to Washington for a great many years.

In November 1906 Count Goluchowsky, whom I had known well as "Golu" and Austrian Minister in Bucharest, resigned the post of Minister for Foreign Affairs in Vienna and was succeeded by Baron d'Aehrenthal, who had been my colleague as Austrian Ambassador in St. Petersburg. As I had known him well and had always been on friendly terms with him I at once wrote to congratulate him on his appointment and sent him a friendly message from Sir Edward Grey. In reply he sent me a long letter professing admiration and friendship for Great Britain and his great desire for our co-operation. In particular he asked for the support of England in Macedonia and the Near East. The Foreign Office had for a long time done their utmost to work hand in hand with Austria in opposition to Russia, and were prepared to continue to do so, but the

very devious policy of Baron d'Aehrenthal from the very outset, culminating in the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908, put an end to all possibility of co-operation between the two countries in the Near East and created a situation of such tension and suspicion that the relations between the two countries were never on the same happy footing again. It is not too much to say that d'Aehrenthal, by his policy of annexation, was indirectly the cause of the Great War, since the murder of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand at Serajevo was the sequel to the annexation and the pretext of the Austrian ultimatum to Servia. d'Aehrenthal was a clever man but very ambitious and wanted to achieve a striking success which would make him and his name, which was little known, illustrious in his own country. Unfortunately for him, the annexation brought very unnecessarily so much anxiety and worry to the old Emperor Francis Joseph and the Austrian Government that he was greatly discredited by it and did not succeed in retaining long the Emperor's confidence. He died shortly after leaving office.

It was entirely due to King Edward's initiative that in October 1906 M. Isvolsky, Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, who was visiting Paris, was invited to pay a short visit to London, an invitation which flattered greatly his vanity and which, though without permanent result, helped materially to smooth the path of the negotiations then in progress for an agreement with Russia. His Majesty wrote to me from Abington, where he was staying, to make the suggestion, leaving the matter for decision to Sir E. Grey and myself, and asking me to breakfast with him at Buckingham Palace the following Sunday to discuss this and other matters of foreign policy. This was just one of those many instances where King Edward's "flair" of what was right was so good and beneficial to our foreign relations.

CHAPTER XI

L O N D O N , 1 9 0 7

DURING the winter of 1906-7 the negotiations with Russia at St. Petersburg were making satisfactory progress, and the Russian proposals relating to Persia were generally accepted with the exception of a few unimportant points of detail. The question of Afghanistan, as also that of a modification of the restrictions relating to the passage of the Dardanelles, presented some difficulty, but there was every reason to hope for a successful issue.

In March 1907 the news reached England of the death of Count Lamsdorff at San Remo, and of M. Pobiedonotzeff, the Procurator of the Russian Holy Synod. The King wrote to me from Biarritz, "I quite agree with you that the former is a loss, while the latter had been a most injudicious counsellor to three Emperors. I rather fancy, though he had retired into private life, his influence was still felt and not for good." I felt genuinely sorry on the receipt of the news of Count Lamsdorff's death, for he and I had collaborated together in circumstances of great difficulty and always in complete harmony and loyalty. I always felt that we are indebted to Count Lamsdorff for his resistance to the military party at St. Petersburg and for his conciliatory attitude, without which we should almost certainly have been dragged into the Russo-Japanese War. As for Pobiedonotzeff, he had always enjoyed very great influence with the Emperor Nicholas, and had encouraged in him the most reactionary policy. His influence had always been disastrous.

At the opening of the year 1907 the French Government were alarmed by an offer made secretly by the German Government to construct at Ferrol with Spanish workmen such warships as the Spanish Government might require provided that the docks and arsenal were handed over to them. Although the offer met with no response in Spain, the French Government became anxious to come to some arrangement with that of Spain which would save Spain from yielding to German pressure to

obtain a footing in the Mediterranean and, with this object in view, initiated a proposal that England, France, and Spain should guarantee one another's possessions in the region of the Mediterranean. The French Government desired a Tripartite Treaty, while His Majesty's Government, though favourably disposed towards the idea, had a preference for an exchange of notes between England and Spain and between France and Spain to secure the object in view. The Spanish Government, on the other hand, would have preferred a Tripartite Treaty because they considered that that form of agreement would have less appearance of a Protectorate over Spain by France and England and that it would not imply a promise between the Governments of England and France to discuss between them matters affecting Spain. Finally, however, the British proposal was accepted by both the French and Spanish Governments.

At first the negotiations did not present much hope of success owing to the intense distrust and dislike of the Spaniards for the French. The King of Spain made a counter-proposal that Great Britain should defend his islands and his shores, and should have full use of the Spanish ports and arsenals. This proposal did not appeal to His Majesty's Government since it would have entailed obligations which they were unwilling to accept. After long discussion with M. Villa Urrutia, the Spanish Ambassador, a pleasant but rather weak man, I was instructed by Sir E. Grey to draw up the text of a new agreement which it was hoped would meet the requirements of the interested Powers.

It happened very conveniently that the King had decided to pay an official visit to the King of Spain in April in the port of Carthagena, it being considered unsafe for the King to visit Madrid owing to the number of anarchists known to be in the Spanish capital and the incompetence of the Spanish police in dealing with them. The King had expressed a wish that I should accompany him, to which Sir E. Grey had assented, and His Majesty being at Biarritz in March I was instructed to accompany the Queen and Princess Victoria, and to join the King's yacht at Toulon on the 6th April. I received, also, instructions from Sir E. Grey to put forward to the Spanish Ministers at Carthagena the text I had prepared, as a tentative proposal on the part of His Majesty's Government for an agreement.

The King and Queen arrived at Carthagena in the Royal yacht on the 8th April and were officially received by the King of Spain and the Spanish Government, of which M. Maura was Prime Minister. Sir M. de Bunsen,

His Majesty's Ambassador at Madrid, came also on board, and created some amusement in having donned white breeches and stockings as uniform on board ship at 10 a.m. The King of Spain was living on board a Spanish battleship, and there were a few other war-vessels of antiquated types lying in the port, which is really a very fine harbour. I am unable to say anything of the town, since during our stay of two days none of us was allowed to go on shore, and, in fact, I could not have found time to do so. The King of Spain, a charming personality who had on more than one occasion shown himself to be as brave as a lion in moments of danger, was in great spirits and evidently very pleased to receive a visit from the King. I think King Edward was equally pleased to meet King Alfonso and that he entertained a feeling of warm respect and affection for him. There were the usual banquets and speeches, but I was fully occupied during the two days of our stay by negotiations with the Spanish Ministers in connection with the proposed Tripartite agreement.

During the first day the negotiations went badly. I submitted to the Minister for Foreign Affairs the text agreed upon with Sir E. Grey as the basis of the notes to be exchanged, but he objected to the form in spite of all my arguments and said that he would submit a counter-proposal next day. However, I took the opportunity after the State Banquet given by the King of Spain, to speak both to King Alfonso and to the Prime Minister, M. Maura, on the subject, explaining at length the views of the British Government and how impossible it would be to modify them. At the same time I remarked how unfortunate it would be that there should be any rift in the complete harmony of the meeting of the two Kings in Spain. My arguments appear to have been effective since, at a meeting that I had next morning with the Prime Minister and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Señor Maura told me that he fully appreciated the force of the parliamentary and political considerations that I had urged upon him, and that he regarded them as unanswerable. He accepted an agreement in the form of an exchange of Notes with the British and French Governments if the French Government would agree, and added that he could suggest no modifications of our text. All he asked was that the French Government should exchange simultaneously with the Spanish Government a note in exactly the same terms as ours.

This was a very favourable result and gave great satisfaction to His Majesty's Government. As a result Notes were exchanged with the Spanish Government on the 16th May between the Spanish Ambassador

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in London and Sir E. Grey, and similar action was taken in Paris. M. Merry del Val, the Spanish Ambassador in London, has since told me more than once that his Government regarded this agreement as the Charter of their peace and of the security of their possessions in the Atlantic and Mediterranean.

After the exchange of notes and declarations there was reason to suppose that the transaction had become known to the German Government, which caused alarm to the French Government who inquired whether, if Germany brought pressure to bear on France or Spain in consequence of the Spanish Notes, British support would be forthcoming. The reply given by Sir E. Grey was that the regions affected being very near Morocco the same support would be forthcoming as His Majesty's Government had assured in connection with the Morocco agreement. With this the French Government were entirely satisfied, and the Notes were communicated confidentially to the Governments of the European Powers. They were received with approval at Rome and Lisbon, with coldness at Vienna and ill humour at Berlin.

During my stay at Carthage I did my utmost to impress upon the Spanish Ministers the urgent necessity of working in Morocco in absolute harmony with the French. They did not conceal their dislike for the French, whom they feared and who evidently bullied them in small ways. That dislike has been in no sense modified in recent years. At the same time I told the Spanish Ministers how pleased our Government had been that they had ranged themselves on our side in regard to the limitation of armaments, which had been an agreeable surprise. They were much gratified at this statement. About this time a question was put in the House of Commons inquiring why a Cabinet Minister was not in attendance upon the King at interviews with foreign sovereigns abroad. I do not know what Sir Edward Grey's reply may have been, but he remarked to me that the conclusion of the Cretan crisis last year and the successful negotiation of the Spanish agreement were in themselves the best justification for my attendance upon the King on such occasions.

Before leaving Carthage the King expressed to me the opinion that it would be a good thing if he saw the King of Italy in an informal way at some Italian port and asked me to arrange with Signor Tittoni, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, for a meeting. As I knew that Sir E. Grey would approve of any civility shown to the King of Italy which would indicate our friendly relations with that country, I lost no time in arranging

a meeting in the Italian port of Gaeta for the morning of 18th April, when the King of Italy would give a luncheon to the King on board the Italian Royal yacht and would leave the same evening on his return to Rome.

From Carthagena the Royal yacht proceeded to Malta, where the King and Queen stayed a few days before proceeding to Gaeta to meet the King of Italy.

On the 18th April a very informal meeting took place at Gaeta between the Kings of England and Italy, without any ceremony whatever, which for them made it the more enjoyable. The King and Queen and all the suite lunched with the King of Italy on board his yacht, there were no toasts and the two Sovereigns hardly mentioned politics between them. I had, however, a good deal of conversation with M. Tittoni, Minister for Foreign Affairs, who had recently seen Prince Bülow, the German Chancellor. He said that Bülow had told him that one of the principal aims of his policy was to improve the relations between Germany and England, and for that reason he would never be alarmed if the relations between England and Italy became more intimate, since close relations between England and a member of the Triple Alliance could only tend to improve the relations between England and Germany. I told M. Tittoni that though we had then no impending questions of any importance with Germany it would be very difficult to arrive at any improvement in our relations with her until we were more convinced than we were then of her friendly attitude towards France, especially in Morocco, where we were under a Treaty obligation to support France. I added that we had no designs against Germany, nor did we wish to place her in a position of isolation, but our attitude was purely defensive and our desire was to live and let live peacefully and quietly. I had also a long conversation with the King of Italy on ordinary topics and he impressed me once more by his extraordinary knowledge of almost any subject one might mention and by the wisdom of his comments. He is indeed a remarkable and agreeable man.

Before leaving, M. Tittoni spoke to me of the King's visit to the King of Italy at Gaeta as a very happy inspiration, which would be greatly appreciated in Italy where there was a true friendship for England, and that the meeting of the two Sovereigns would have a very beneficial effect. I impressed upon M. Tittoni that the inspiration was entirely the King's.

From Gaeta the King and Queen proceeded to Naples, where I took leave of Their Majesties and returned to England on the 21st April. The

King very kindly pressed me to stay on board the yacht, but I had promised Sir E. Grey to be back at my work about the 22nd. The King wrote to me later from Naples, "I am glad you had a successful journey home. We regretted very much your departure and I think you would have enjoyed Palermo, where we spent three delightful days in perfect weather. Churchill (the Consul) was invaluable and made the most perfect 'cicerone' possible."

The visits of King Edward to the Kings of Spain and Italy produced a violent outburst in the German Press which attributed to His Majesty the most sinister motives for paying them. Consequently I received instructions from the King, who was still on board the Royal yacht at Palermo, to take an opportunity of telling Count Metternich how much annoyed the King had been at the comments in the German papers on his cruise. I was to say that, with the exception of the visit to Carthagen, which was a return visit, the cruise had been entirely a private one for pleasure, and yet in Germany the most sinister motives had been attributed to the King, who was accused of deep-laid plots against Germany. Count Metternich was away, but I suggested that Sir E. Grey might say something to the German Chargé d'Affaires to the effect that the King was anxious to invite the German Emperor to a State visit at Windsor, but that it would be very difficult to carry out His Majesty's wishes if the German Press continued its attitude of hostility towards the King and of antagonism to France in Morocco. Sir E. Grey was averse from saying anything himself to Count Metternich since the King's State visits had always been so far made without reference to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, but he thought there could be no harm if I were authorized by the King to speak privately to the German Chargé d'Affaires in this sense, not as Under-Secretary but as a private individual who had been attached to the suite of the King when travelling abroad. When I referred this view to the King he wrote to say he considered it premature to raise the question of a visit of the Kaiser to Windsor at a moment when he was being abused and attacked by the German Press for meeting the Kings of Spain and Italy in their own harbours. I did speak, however, to Herr Stumm, the German Chargé d'Affaires, without mentioning the proposed visit, and he agreed that the German Press had gone mad and seemed hardly accountable for its actions. Still, a word in season from Prince Bülow to the Press could have changed the tone of the Press in a country where discipline was paramount.

When I passed through Paris on my way home from Naples I found a storm in a teacup raging as to an interview which had taken place at the British Embassy on the 9th April between M. Clemenceau and Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, the Prime Minister. It appears that after the interview Clemenceau told Sir F. Bertie that he was much concerned at a statement made by the Prime Minister to the effect that under no circumstances would public opinion in England permit the despatch of British troops to France for joint action with the French. In the course of conversation M. Clemenceau had pointed out that the ambitious and aggressive attitude of Germany might possibly bring about a state of things which could only result in war and he therefore regretted the reductions then being made in the British Army. He had been quite taken aback by what he understood the Prime Minister to have said. The Prime Minister denied that he had ever said anything of the kind and I was of opinion that his version was correct, since it was undeniable that he *had* contemplated the possibility of the necessity for such action in 1906. King Edward, when the matter was put before him, accepted the Prime Minister's denial as the correct version but remarked in a letter to me that Clemenceau could hardly have invented such a statement. This little incident is of some interest in the light of later history. I may however mention here that Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman's Government had already come to an unwritten agreement with France to prepare for an emergency, an expeditionary force of six divisions to be a striking force fully mobilized and equipped to take the field at the outbreak of war. Even in those days a very elaborate scheme was drawn up by the War Office under Mr. Haldane, Secretary of State for War, for the mobilization and despatch to France of six divisions. The mobilization, entrainment and embarkation of the troops were prepared in the greatest detail and corrected every year at a meeting of the British and French General Staffs. Mr. Haldane, to his great credit, was entirely responsible for this, but there was nothing in writing and no pledge that our troops would under any circumstances be sent to France.

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman was singularly unfortunate at this moment in his actions, for he wrote an article in *The Nation* relating to Franco-German relations which thoroughly upset the French and German Press. In a letter the King wrote to me, saying, "I wonder if the Prime Minister realizes how he has angered the French and German Press by his most injudicious article in *The Nation*? Ministers nowadays seem to forget

the responsibilities of their office and ventilate their opinions as if they were private individuals." Yet Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman really loved Paris and the French.

I would like to mention here that the King liked and always spoke in the highest terms of Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman. He frequently expressed to me his appreciation of the manner in which the Prime Minister always consulted His Majesty and paid attention to his views and wishes.

It was in May 1907 that I received private information from Sir E. Goschen at Vienna of an intrigue on the part of Baron d'Aehrenthal to re-create the "Dreibund" of Austria, Germany and Russia, with France brought in as a fourth Power; England and Italy being left in a position of isolation. It was in connection with reforms in Macedonia under what was called the Murzteg programme, which were not progressing satisfactorily and which were in the process of execution by England, France, Austria, Italy and Russia. The proposal was to bring in Germany, to eliminate England and Italy and to bring about a settlement of the Macedonian question without them. Unfortunately for d'Aehrenthal the cat was let out of the bag secretly to Sir E. Goschen, our Ambassador in Vienna, by Prince Demidoff of the Russian Embassy, who was always very friendly to England, where he had many friends. The news was confirmed by M. Cambon, who came and informed me as soon as he heard of it, and Sir E. Grey spoke to Count Mensdorff in very drastic terms on the subject. Of course d'Aehrenthal denied the truth of the story, and it was denied also at St. Petersburg, but there was no doubt about it, and even M. Ouroussoff, the Russian Ambassador in Vienna, went about saying that there had been an unfortunate indiscretion somewhere, little realizing that the seat of indiscretion was in his own Embassy. M. Tittoni, the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, was perfectly furious over the perfidy and wickedness of d'Aehrenthal and the Austrian Government, since there was in existence an Austro-Italian agreement that nothing should be done by either Power in the Near East without the consent and co-operation of the other. This was a further example of the dangerous and, one might almost say, treacherous policy of d'Aehrenthal who, less than six months earlier, had written me a profuse letter of friendly assurances of his desire to cultivate the best possible relations with England and to work in harmony with this country, especially in questions affecting the Near East. It is just possible that it may have been intended as a means of testing the strength of the ties binding Russia and France respectively

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to England, but in any case the scheme fell through and nothing more was heard of it.

A severe loss was sustained by the Government and country in the early months of 1907 in the serious illness of Lord Cromer, who was in consequence compelled to resign his post in Cairo which he had held for nearly a quarter of a century and during which time he had introduced peace and prosperity in the country and built up an Anglo-Egyptian administration which was the admiration of the world. His breakdown in health was a national misfortune especially at a moment when the Khedive was actively disloyal and fomenting pan-Islamic intrigues with Constantinople for the subversion of British interests in Egypt and the Soudan. Although he happily recovered and survived a good many years, so that I still had the pleasure of seeing him often as a friend, the question of his successor was one which presented great difficulties and was the subject of long discussion and consideration by Sir E. Grey and the Cabinet. During this period I was invited to an official dinner at Buckingham Palace and found myself sitting between the Bishop of London and Mr. John Burns, who was in the Government and President of the Local Government Board. I felt I had been interestingly placed and was not disappointed. During the course of conversation with John Burns I alluded to the resignation of Lord Cromer and to the difficulty of finding a successor. To this he replied, "I know who would be a good successor," and on my inquiring whom he meant, he said, "Appoint me, I will rule Egypt like a Pharaoh ! you will not be disappointed." I can quite believe that he would have ruled Egypt with considerable force and vigour and that the prestige and position of England in Egypt would in no sense have suffered under his administration.

The King of Siam paid a state visit to London in June 1907 and was well received. He possessed much charm of manner, and was very European in his tastes, having been educated in St. Petersburg where I had known him, and in Paris. The only hitch that occurred was that he expected to receive the Order of the Garter. The King absolutely refused to give it to him and rightly so, but offered the Victoria Chain which, after all, is in fact the most select decoration in His Majesty's gift. The Siamese Ministers quoted with some reason the cases of the bestowal of the Garter upon the Sultan of Turkey and the Shah of Persia, two deplorable precedents, but the King was adamant. The King of Siam was quite willing to accept the Victoria Chain but consulted his Government, who advised him against it.

FERDINAND OF BULGARIA

Consequently no decorations of any kind were given or received. It was an awkward affair altogether.

During the summer of 1907 it leaked out that Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria had the intention of declaring the independence of Bulgaria at the Tirnovo fêtes in August. The moment Sir E. Grey heard of it he sent instructions to Sir George Buchanan, our Agent in Sofia, to deprecate any action which would tend to change the *status quo* in Bulgaria and create complications amongst the Balkan States. The Prince's determination to seize the first opportunity to secure for himself the title of King was so well known that it was realized that it was only a question of time before he did so. The Prince was furious at the news having leaked out, but assurances were given at once that no action would be taken. The King had already met Prince Ferdinand at Marienbad the previous August and wrote to me, "I see a good deal of the Prince of Bulgaria who is taking the cure here. He is always an interesting personage and undoubtedly clever. The Prime Minister is much struck by him, so is Goschen." The fact was that he was too clever and his ambition led to his downfall.

In August 1907, the King on his way to Marienbad paid a visit to the German Emperor at the Palace of Wilhelmshöhe, near Cassel, and to the Emperor of Austria at Ischl. By the King's desire I again accompanied His Majesty. After a rough sea passage in the North Sea the King disembarked at Flushing. His Majesty was met at Cassel by the German Emperor and Prince Bülow and had a very good reception from the people of Cassel. I was struck by the immense number of children in the streets, and when I mentioned the fact later to the German Empress she told me that in Cassel the families were enormous, and that the women of Cassel always spoke to her of her own as being quite a small family. This was certainly an indication of the innate strength and vigour of the German nation.

The Kaiser, who always loved military display, commenced the day with a march past before the King of the Army Corps of Cassel, which bored the King, the remainder of the day being spent quietly in the grounds of the Palace.

I had known Prince Bülow fairly well at Bucharest, where he was German Minister, and I had a long conversation with him in his private apartments. He held forth to me in what seemed a prepared speech for nearly an hour. He alluded to the negotiations for an Anglo-Russian agreement of which he said he would warmly welcome the conclusion, but it was evident that the question he wished most to discuss was that of Morocco and

Germany's relations with France. He expressed himself as very anxious for an improvement of relations with France, and being convinced that France had not the slightest desire or intention to attack Germany, he gave me the most formal assurances that Germany had no desire to attack France, nor to "brutaliser" France, nor to create difficulties for France in Morocco or elsewhere. He realized France's difficulties in Morocco and would do nothing to increase them; all he wanted was fair treatment for German traders and merchants. Of course, as I told him, I was very pleased to be able to take note of such satisfactory assurances, but I pointed out to him that the actions of Dr. Rosen, the German Minister at Tangier, were not in conformity with them. He remarked that he regarded Dr. Rosen as a *carrièreiste*, but that he had sent such strict instructions that no further difficulties needed to be anticipated. After touching on political questions in different parts of the globe, he expressed his regret that Prince Albert of Schleswig-Holstein and Lord Lonsdale were such great personal friends of the Emperor, since he was convinced that their influence over His Majesty was not conducive to friendly relations between the British and German royal families. I think there was no truth in this.

The German Emperor talked to me a good deal during the day, but studiously avoided all political questions in which England and Germany were interested, and the King also told me that the Kaiser had not discussed politics with His Majesty. He did tell me, however, that he had seen the Emperor of Russia recently at Swinemünde in great spirits, full of optimism as regards the future and determined to dismiss every Duma that acted in opposition to the Government. A rash policy to adopt in a country just beginning to feel its political legs.

The King left in the evening for Ischl and was met at Gmunden by the Emperor of Austria, who travelled with him to Ischl. I found there Baron d'Aehrenthal and we spent the day together. The contrast with the visit to Wilhelmshöhe was very marked as there was no military display whatever, everything being very well but quietly done. The German Court was in fact a vulgarly flamboyant Court.

I had during the day a long discussion with d'Aehrenthal upon almost every subject of possible controversy between our two Governments and removed many misapprehensions. I had been instructed by Sir E. Grey to clear up the motives of d'Aehrenthal's recent unfriendly attitude towards us in several matters and I taxed him with his intrigue to re-establish the Dreibund, and his hostile attitude towards the Spanish Note. He defended

himself on all points, stating that his objection to the Spanish Note was on account of its inopportuneness, since it had seemed to be directed against Germany, Austria's ally, with a view to completing her isolation in Europe. I pointed out how groundless this objection was and that His Majesty's Government had long desired to make an agreement of this kind to safeguard our position at Gibraltar. The King's visit to Carthage pointed to the moment that would be most propitious for the negotiations, but the agreement was in no sense directed against any Power whatever. d'Aehrenthal added that he had received reports from his agents abroad of attempts made by His Majesty's Government to give encouragement to Servia against Austria at a moment when Austro-Servian relations were strained and also to incite Italy to adopt a hostile policy in Albania. I told him that all such imputations were absolutely groundless, and that it was a pity that on receiving these reports he had not cleared up the mystery by communicating their contents to Sir E. Grey in the same way that Sir E. Grey had quite recently put before Count Mensdorff reports that he had received of the unfriendly intrigues of Austria.

During the day I developed, in accordance with Sir E. Grey's instructions, the views of His Majesty's Government on the Macedonian question and the murderous proclivities of the Greek bands and made the proposal to inform the Greek Government that, if steps were not taken to stop the operations of these bands, the Powers themselves would take forcible measures to put an end to an intolerable situation. The difficulty as regards these bands was that they were led by officers of the regular Greek Army. d'Aehrenthal accepted rather grudgingly this proposal as an alternative in the event of all other measures failing.

In reviewing the general situation he considered the balance of power more evenly poised than had ever been the case before. He rejoiced in the improvement of Anglo-German relations while the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian agreement would bring peace to Asia and eliminate the danger of a conflagration which might easily spread to Europe. Improved relations between Germany and France in Morocco were very welcome and the only danger in this direction was, in his opinion, the possibility of the revival of the influence of Baron Holstein who had been responsible for the appearance of the Kaiser at Tangier and for the disastrous policy of Germany in Morocco and whom he knew to have the *petite entrée* of Prince Bülow's house in Berlin. As regards Anglo-Austrian relations he expressed his conviction of the community of British and Austrian interests and of the

necessity of maintaining the traditional policy of friendship between the two countries. These were proved by later events to be merely polite platitudes on the part of d'Aehrenthal with probably his tongue in his cheek !

The Emperor sent for me during the day and talked with me for about half an hour very pleasantly. He was a very charming old gentleman, very courtly and sympathetic, but I should say not very clever. He was getting very old. One could not help feeling sorrow and pity for a man in his position who during the whole of his life had experienced nothing but misfortune both in his private and public life, and this cruel fate followed him until his death during the Great War.

The King left next morning for Marienbad and I returned to England.

On August 31st, 1907, an event occurred of great international importance, i.e. the signature of the Anglo-Russian Convention, which had been under discussion for nearly four years and actually in the process of negotiation for a whole year. It was the triumph of King Edward's policy of which the Anglo-French "entente" was the first step and it prepared the ground for future eventualities which even at that time were only too probable as the outcome of German militarism and chauvinism. As regards the Treaty itself it was not so much its text as the fact of its existence that was important, and though its terms might have been more advantageous to England in certain respects the Treaty served its purpose and maintained peace and friendly relations between England and Russia for ten years. That was the aim in view and it was worth some sacrifice to secure. On the other hand, M. Cambon told me that he regarded the Treaty as a triumph of British diplomacy and that it was most advantageous to England who had got much the best of the bargain. As the opinion of an independent and clever man his statement was interesting. The Treaty received general approval both at home and abroad, though its provisions gave scope to criticism from people like Lord Curzon and Lord Percy in both Houses of Parliament. The King wrote to me from Marienbad :

"I was delighted to get Grey's and Nicolson's cypher telegrams last night telling me that the 'Anglo-Russian Convention' had been signed at St. Petersburg. It must be a great relief to your and Grey's minds and Nicolson deserves the *greatest* praise for having carried out these most difficult negotiations with such skill and perseverance ! When you write to him please tell him how deeply I feel it. These last negotiations and the part he played last year at Algeciras places him in the front rank of our diplomatists."

Sir A. Nicolson rightly deserved this praise.

ANGLO-RUSSIAN CONVENTION

In a private letter to me, Sir E. Grey wrote of the Treaty :

"It is all very satisfactory, and you have as much reason as anyone to be gratified, for your share in the transaction has been a very great one, and you will supervise the working of the agreement and the development of it in years to come ; your stay at the Foreign Office being more assured than mine."

Sir A. Nicolson wrote,

"I want to send a little personal line to tell you how deeply grateful I am to you for all the admirable support and assistance you have given me during these wearisome negotiations. It has always been such a comfort to me to know that you were at the 'other end' and you have been simply splendid in the prompt manner in which you have replied to the rain of telegrams I have been sending you during the last few days. To me it is a very pleasant thought that so old a friend and colleague has been associated with me in really a very important business. My blessings on you."

In November the German Emperor and Empress paid a state visit to Windsor and had a great reception in London. He was entertained in the City by the Lord Mayor and was much gratified at the cordiality of his welcome.

Before the arrival of the Kaiser it was generally felt that if Prince Bülow accompanied His Majesty his presence would be resented owing to his passive attitude towards the campaign of calumny which raged in Germany during the South African War, and to some of his most inexcusable utterances at that time. Sir F. Lascelles was requested to give a note of warning, but he felt that it might be unpleasant for himself and disagreeable to the Emperor or German Government and therefore in the end it fell to my lot to do this through Count Metternich. The latter was surprised, but took it well on the whole, and Prince Bülow, who had greatly desired to form part of the Kaiser's suite, stayed away, his place being taken by Baron Schön, whom I had previously known well as Councillor to the German Embassy in Paris. But Prince Bülow must have been very angry.

Towards the close of the year rumours were current of a Baltic agreement between Germany, Russia and Sweden, guaranteeing the *status quo* in the Baltic. Great mystery was maintained, but eventually it transpired that, on the initiative of M. Isvolsky, Russia was to obtain by this agreement the removal of restrictions as to the Aland Isles, over which Russia was to resume complete liberty of action. Sweden was to receive some purely moral advantage, while Germany was to obtain such material guarantees from

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Russia as would enable her to transfer German naval strength from the Baltic to the North Sea. It was evident that this was intended as a sort of counterblast to the Anglo-Franco-Spanish agreement of the previous spring relating to the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. Nothing came of it, since Sweden viewed with natural suspicion the resumption by Russia of full sovereign rights over the Aland Isles, even under certain voluntarily imposed conditions which the lapse of time might modify or cause to disappear, but it was a significant and curious fact that Denmark was left out of the combination. In any case, Russia could not have derived any advantage from an arrangement with Sweden and Germany without the abrogation of the Treaty of 1856 and we should have had a decisive voice in the settlement of that question.

CHAPTER XII

L O N D O N , 1 9 0 8

DURING the last days of January 1908 the world was horrified by the news of the atrocious assassination of the King and Crown Prince of Portugal by agents of the republican party, Prince Manoel, the second son, escaping unhurt. The King and Queen with their two sons were driving together in a carriage when an attack was made from either side of the street. The King was the first to be fired at and the Queen, on seeing what had occurred, rose up and tried both to beat the assailants away and to shield the King. The King and Crown Prince were killed at once and another of the assassins was actually aiming at the Queen when he was cut down and killed by the A.D.C. in waiting. The evident intention was to kill the four occupants of the carriage, but the Queen and younger prince escaped, as did also the assassins.

The King and Queen were not popular. The King was alleged to have squandered the finances of the country and an increase of the civil list had just been asked for. The behaviour of the people was astounding. No sorrow or regret was expressed, rather satisfaction and excuses for the deed. Prince Manoel ascended the throne on the 1st February but was deposed two years later. For a long time he was unable to leave the Palace to take the necessary oath before the Cortes as the assassins, who were well known, circulated freely in the streets. The situation was one of great tension, and although Soveral was of opinion that the presence of a British squadron in the harbour would help to secure the position of the King and pressed for it, the Foreign Office were of opinion that such a measure might endanger the lives of British subjects in Lisbon and might even precipitate a crisis and result in the King's deposition. I pressed these views very strongly upon Soveral, but he never quite accepted them, although they were corroborated by Sir F. Villiers, our Minister in Lisbon. King Manoel proved in the end to be weak and in no sense a leader of men, and the republican party succeeded in alienating the

loyalty of the army and of the fleet which was always of doubtful allegiance, with the result that he was peacefully deposed and left Portugal for this country where, except for brief intervals, he lived afterwards. What was peculiar as regards his position was that, as he could not have a Portuguese or a British passport, he had to travel about with a passport drawn up and signed by me in my own handwriting requesting foreign customs authorities and others to grant him facilities when travelling, etc. It was quite irregular, but it received Sir E. Grey's approval and it was the only official document in the possession of the ex-King to show who he was !

It was on the 6th March that a letter appeared in *The Times* from their military correspondent announcing that Lord Tweedmouth, First Lord of the Admiralty, had received a personal and private letter from the German Emperor relating to naval matters and containing the Kaiser's views upon the British programme of naval construction, to which he had replied at length. What did not transpire was the fact that in his reply Lord Tweedmouth had submitted to the Kaiser the naval estimates for the year before they had been submitted to the House of Commons. The Prime Minister heard of the correspondence for the first time through *The Times* and was much annoyed by it. A Cabinet Council was called to discuss the matter and it was decided that every effort should be made to gloss over the incident and to conceal the fact of the estimates having been communicated to the Emperor without the knowledge of the House of Commons. The correspondence was communicated to Mr. Balfour and Lord Lansdowne in order to secure their neutrality, and thanks to their influence and the loyalty of their followers the incident was brought to a close without the real facts being known. There would have been an uproar in the House of Commons had the whole incident become public property.

The King was at Biarritz and from there wrote : " Your letter to Davidson in re the German Emperor's letter to Tweedmouth interested me very much. There seems considerable excitement on the subject at home, but I trust for many reasons it will soon be forgotten. *The Times* is unnecessarily vicious on the subject." This letter was dated 10th March 1908 and again on the 17th March His Majesty wrote : " Thank God ! the German Emperor and Tweedmouth incident is at an end. Asquith's strong speech about the navy is the outcome of it all, so some good has come out of it after all."

Shortly after this it became known that Lord Tweedmouth was showing

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to everybody and especially to all his lady friends the letter he had received from the Kaiser. I happened to see the letter myself as it eventually came to the Foreign Office in order that we should be convinced of its harmless nature ! It would have been harmless and regarded as one more of the Kaiser's spontaneous and unexpected ebullitions if no reply had been sent to it. Nothing however seemed to daunt the indiscretion of Lord Tweedmouth who, having shown it to several of his lady friends, finally confided it to the care of another lady friend. This lady was known to the late Prince Francis of Teck and as it might have been a serious matter for the Liberal Government if its contents and the reply to it had become generally known, I was authorized by the Prime Minister to endeavour to obtain possession of it, and to go as far as to offer £200 for it. I ascertained through Prince Francis that the lady's finances were at that time at a low ebb and he kindly undertook to interview the lady and to see what could be done. He did so and was promised the letter next time he called. When he returned in two or three days he found that the lady had just bought six new hats, and as she was evidently in funds then, the letter could not be bought. It was obtained some years later but I do not know how. It is only right to say that Lord Tweedmouth's brain was at that time affected by a serious illness, from which he died a little more than a year later.

I happened to have an interview with him on official business in his room at the Admiralty on the preceding Christmas Eve and I returned to the Foreign Office with the conviction that he was suffering from softening of the brain. His escapade with the German Emperor and the naval estimates did not surprise me, nor later when during a discussion in the House of Lords upon the question of erecting a statue in Westminster Abbey to Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman he referred in a speech to Lady Campbell-Bannerman as "a lady of sterling value but of no personal charm". Happily his words were not reported.

It was in the month of March that Sir N. O'Connor died at Constantinople. I was glad that he never knew that his recall had been decided upon. He had done excellent service in the past, though he had not been a success at Constantinople. I had known him well at Sofia and though I liked him I did not find him easy to serve as a Chief. The post was not filled till later by the appointment of Sir G. Lowther, Minister in Tangier. Unfortunately he also died five years later.

The King and Queen were naturally anxious to visit their daughter

and son-in-law in their newly created Kingdom of Norway, and it was decided to pay an official visit to Christiania in the early spring, combining with it an official visit to Copenhagen, the home of Queen Alexandra and all her family. A visit to Stockholm came naturally under discussion, but the relations of this country with Sweden had been for some time strained owing to the support given here to the movement for the separation of Norway, though they were on the mend, thanks to the support given by the Foreign Office to Sweden in connection with the negotiations with Germany and Russia over the Aland Isles. It was decided, therefore, that an official visit to Stockholm should take place, and that it should have priority over the visit to Christiania. The King was so kind as to ask me to accompany him once more as Chief of his suite, and I may add that the King of Denmark made a special request that I might accompany His Majesty to Copenhagen.

The King and Queen with Princess Victoria left London on the 22nd April and proceeded via Germany to Copenhagen. For Queen Alexandra it was painful to pass through Slesvig since from the train she pointed out to me the palace in which she had spent most of her childhood and the church in which most of her family had been buried. A very amusing incident occurred in the train. The King and Queen were at dinner and I had the honour of sitting on the Queen's left. Just as one of the Royal servants handed to the Queen a dish of quails, the train gave a lurch and the quails were precipitated in every direction. After an effort had been made to clear up the mess on the table I happened to look up at the Queen and noticed that two quails were hanging in her hair by their claws, of which she was quite unconscious. I told Her Majesty but did not dare to offer to remove them until she told me to do so, as I knew she hated anybody to touch her hair. She burst into laughter when she put up her hand and felt them hanging and asked me to remove them, which, of course, I did with great care. She never forgot this incident and afterwards frequently joked with me about it. We arrived at Copenhagen in the midst of a snowstorm which did not however seem to damp the enthusiasm of the crowds in the streets. We had to undergo a series of very old-fashioned state functions which were homely but boring. I had political conversations with the King and Count Raben, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, but nothing of any great interest was discussed. The King was a fine, good-looking man of much charm. Copenhagen struck me as a nice town, somewhat behind the times but very advanced from a com-

mercial point of view, with splendid docks, wharves and railways running alongside. The people too seemed nice, simple and friendly.

We were taken out to see the villa, a few miles outside Copenhagen, the joint property of the Queen and the Empress of Russia, her sister. I have seldom seen a more ghastly property, there being no privacy owing to the road passing close to the house, so that those on the road could see straight into the windows, while access to the sea could be obtained only by crossing the road. Separate arrangements had to be made for the housing of English and Russian servants and it would be difficult to imagine anything more uncomfortable than the situation of the attendants upon the two Sovereigns. Still, the Queen made nothing of these drawbacks and appeared to be thoroughly satisfied and pleased with everything. I sometimes wonder what has happened to the villa, for I believe that that was the last occasion that Queen Alexandra went there, while it might have served as a refuge for the Empress of Russia.

From Copenhagen we crossed the Straits in the ferryboat with our train on board and went to Stockholm without stopping on the road. The King was able to give only a day and a half to his visit but everything went off very well and the King had a splendid reception. There had been an important change in public feeling towards England after it had become known that, owing to our attitude in the question of the Aland Isles, the danger of the abrogation of the Treaty of 1856 had been averted. I had a long private audience of the King, whom I found to be a most intelligent and cultivated person, also with the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Prime Minister, M. Taube, was a sailor, a straightforward man with strong convictions, while the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Count Trolle, was a charming and very attractive personality. In accordance with my instructions I urged upon them all now to accept the separation of Norway as a *fait accompli*, and in their own interest to wipe the slate clean and be on friendly terms with both Norway and Denmark. They all agreed as to the desirability of such a policy but added that the sore was still too fresh.

Stockholm impressed me as a most beautiful city with splendid buildings, fine streets, branches of the sea penetrating everywhere, and a big river rushing right through the very heart of the town. The palace is an enormous and fine building situated on a hill and its interior is literally crowded with wonderful works of art, loot from the Thirty Years War and the Napoleonic campaigns. Sweden has never been invaded and her

trophies therefore remain intact. When one sees on every side the large number of these Swedish trophies bearing witness to successful campaigns in the past one can well understand their pride of race and their attachment to their old traditions. At the same time one could not help noticing that the Swedes are a much more cultivated and aristocratic race than their two Scandinavian neighbours. Short as was our stay, it was most enjoyable in every way.

The visit of the King and Queen to Christiania assumed the character of a family rather than an official visit. Everything went off well and happily. The Norwegians are a very simple race, though not without culture. There was little scope for political conversations with them.

Before the King's return from Christiania the question of a visit by His Majesty to the Emperor of Russia at Reval, on the same lines as the visit paid by the King to the King of Spain at Carthagena had been raised. The Prime Minister and Sir E. Grey were entirely in favour of it and considered that a visit, after the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian agreement in the previous year, could be productive only of good. When the King was consulted he approved of the proposed visit to the Emperor of Russia at Reval at the beginning of June, and the idea was welcomed with enthusiasm by the Emperor and Empress, who specially asked that Queen Alexandra might accompany His Majesty. The King invited me to accompany him again as Minister in Attendance, and at his suggestion I brought with me Lord Errington,¹ my Private Secretary. Admiral Lord Fisher, Count Benckendorff, the Russian Ambassador and Sir A. Nicolson, our Ambassador at St. Petersburg, were also of the party on board the *Victoria and Albert*. On political grounds the Government wished the visit to be kept secret as long as possible, on which the King wrote to me, "as the Cabinet knows it the secret will not be long kept. Possibly T. (Lord Tweedmouth) has either written or telegraphed to the G.E. (German Emperor)"! The visit to Reval was fixed for the 9th June.

We were unfortunate in having a very rough passage across the North Sea and arrived at Kiel on 7th June. The Royal yacht rolled terribly. The Queen and I were the only two who were able to come to meals, but the Queen had quite an alarming accident. She and I were having tea at the end of a long table with a large hot-water urn, teapot, etc., between us, and quantities of dishes, plates, etc., close by. Suddenly there was a

¹ Now Earl of Cromer.

tremendous wave and to my horror I saw the Queen thrown backwards violently on her back on the floor of the cabin, followed by the tea-urn, teapot, etc., all on her lap. I had been precipitated against the table, but steadying myself I ran round the end of the table, snatched the urn and teapot from the Queen's lap which was saturated with boiling water and steadily raised Her Majesty by her hands. As soon as the Queen was on her feet the return roll of the ship threw us both violently against the table, where I held Her Majesty firmly till she felt steady enough to go down the gangway to her cabin. It was a most unpleasant incident, but very fortunate that the Queen suffered no injury.

On arrival at Kiel, where all the German Fleet was assembled, Their Majesties were met by Prince and Princess Henry of Prussia and a large staff of officers who came on board and accompanied the Royal yacht as far as the entrance to the Baltic. I knew the canal well as I had traversed it more than once when returning by sea from St. Petersburg, but it was more interesting this time as there was a great display of German troops, and detachments of cavalry accompanied the yacht, galloping along the banks. It was during the passage of the Royal yacht, escorted by the cruisers *Minotaur* and *Achilles* that I noticed some activity at one point of the canal and was told by a young German lieutenant, who evidently enjoyed airing his knowledge of English, that the work of doubling the canal had commenced, so that two warships should be able to pass each other, and that by the terms of the contract the work would be completed in five years. Of the many naval officers on board the Royal yacht and the two cruisers not one had noticed the work in progress, and when I reported the fact on my return to London, the Admiralty was sceptical and had to send an officer to verify the fact before they were convinced. From this it was easy to predict that Germany would not precipitate war before 1913 if it could be avoided !

The King and Queen arrived at Reval in splendid weather on the morning of the 9th June and there met the Emperor, the two Empresses, together with Stolypine, the Prime Minister, and Isvolsky, the Minister for Foreign Affairs. They were on board the Imperial yachts *Standart*, *Polar Star* and the cruiser *Almaz*, the sole survivor of the large Russian fleet that took part in and was destroyed at the Battle of Tsushima in 1905. The two days spent off Reval were devoted to conversations, exchange of views and official banquets. There was no disguising the fact that the Emperor and Empress were extraordinarily happy in the company of their

uncle and aunt, and the visit had largely a family character. The Empress was however in a state of nervous hysteria for, at a dance after dinner on board the *Standart* when I happened to wander round to the other side of the deck, I heard sobs and found the Empress sitting alone and weeping, and on my offer to obtain help she asked to be left alone.

On the second day of the visit when lunching on board the *Standart* the King sent me a note written in pencil on his menu asking me whether I did not think he might appoint the Emperor to be a British Admiral of the Fleet? (This menu I treasure amongst my papers.) I at once replied that I thought the idea an excellent one and the same evening at the official banquet on board the Royal yacht the King proposed the Emperor's health as a British Admiral of the Fleet, and the British cruisers, lying close by, thundered an admiral's salute. The Emperor was immensely pleased at the unexpected honour bestowed upon him by the King and paid His Majesty a counter compliment by asking him to do him the honour of becoming an Admiral "of our young and growing fleet", of which the *Almaz* was almost the only existing representative.

On my return to England I was informed by Mr. Asquith, the Prime Minister, that the action of the King in appointing an Admiral of the Fleet off his own bat was unconstitutional and that the consent of the Prime Minister should have been obtained in the first instance. The King, to whom I mentioned the objection, was quite unaware of any restriction of his complete liberty of action in an appointment of this character, and needless to say, I had had no previous experience of any kind in such matters. Mr. Asquith, however, approved in principle of the action taken by His Majesty and was quite pleasant over it.

As a matter of fact I have since learnt on very reliable authority that this was not the first time that the King had acted in this manner. Lord Selborne, when First Lord of the Admiralty, had protested against the King making foreign sovereigns Admirals of the Fleet without previous consultation with the Government. This may have been the case of the King of Greece. The King was angry and asked what could Cabinet Ministers know about such things? Lord Selborne admitted afterwards that there were many arguments in favour of the King's contention and that he did not propose to press the point. This must have been before July 1902 when Lord Selborne was succeeded by Lord Cawdor as First Lord.

Nearly all my time at Reval was occupied in conversations with Isvolsky and Stolypine on questions of foreign affairs in which good

progress was made, but I had several opportunities of short conversations with the Emperor, who was in the best possible spirits. He was very enthusiastic over the Anglo-Russian agreement, and foretold close co-operation in the future between the two countries. Several of the Emperor's suite, who were personal friends of long standing, commented to me upon the marked difference in the Emperor's spirits and attitude during the King's visit to Reval compared with what they were at the Emperor's recent visit to the German Emperor at Swinemünde, where he felt anxiety all the time as to what might be unexpectedly sprung upon him. The visit was altogether a great success and the Royal yacht left for England on the morning of the 11th and arrived safely after a good passage.

Although from a political point of view the King's visit to the Emperor of Russia off Reval could only have the most beneficial result on Anglo-Russian relations, there is no doubt that it aroused a good deal of suspicion both at Berlin and Vienna. The settlement of disputes between England and Russia by the Anglo-Russian agreement of the previous year and the increasing friendly relations between the two Governments made statesmen in Germany and Austria fear lest the *entente* with Russia on Asiatic questions might be extended to questions of European continental politics. Consequently the attacks in the Press of both countries upon the British Government and in particular upon King Edward, who was depicted at Vienna and Berlin as the Machiavellian instigator of multiform iniquity, could hardly have been more violent. Later in the year the attention of both Governments was called to the impropriety of these scurrilous attacks.

There was yet one more consequence of the meeting at Reval. It was of common notoriety that a revolutionary movement in Turkey was in existence. It had its origin and centre amongst Turkish refugees in Paris, where it was known as the "Committee of Union and Progress". The spark was set to the mine by rumours of an Anglo-Russian scheme said to have been matured at Reval for the complete European control of Macedonia, which eventually would be extended to the whole of Turkey in Europe. There was of course no truth in these rumours, but in the following month of July the revolution under Enver Bey and Niazim Bey broke out in Macedonia with the support of the 3rd Army Corps, and in a few weeks' time the Sultan Abdul Hamid capitulated and re-enacted the ill-fated Constitution of 1876. The spontaneous enthusiasm with which the news of the revolution was received in England soon removed all suspicion of reactionary tendencies on the part of Great Britain, but

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the same feeling of sympathy and approval was not displayed by public opinion in Germany and Austria, where it was realized that the diplomatic preponderance in Constantinople of the Central European Governments had, in the rejuvenation of Turkey, received a serious check. The Anglo-phil Kiamil Pasha was appointed President of the Council at Constantinople, and everything looked hopeful and as though the resurrection of Turkey would really take place, until intrigues amongst the Young Turks created a situation which could only find a solution in the counter-revolution of the following year.

In the meantime, King Edward's annual visit to Marienbad was due in August and His Majesty decided, after consultation with the Prime Minister, to meet both the German Emperor and the Emperor of Austria *en route*. The relations between England and Germany showed a lack of good feeling owing to the suspicions harboured of German intentions in the gradual and steady extension of their naval forces which were being built on lines not suited for long cruises but for cruises of short range and to carry the heaviest possible armaments. The Government welcomed the idea and were of opinion that if, as a result of the interview between King Edward and the German Kaiser, it could be shown that there had been a slackening of activity in the building programme of the two navies, such a result would be of the greatest value to the peace of the world, and the King and Emperor would be rightly hailed as the Peace-makers of Europe. Consequently it was decided by the Government to furnish to the King a memorandum to serve His Majesty as a guide in the interview which he was to have with the German Emperor at Cronberg on his way to Marienbad. This was really a very interesting innovation, since for the first time in history the British Government briefed the King to act as their spokesman in an interview with the Head of a Foreign State, and it serves as an indisputable proof of the confidence they felt in the wisdom and tact of the Sovereign in dealing with such matters. It was arranged that I should accompany His Majesty as Minister in Attendance and I received a copy of the same memorandum with instructions from Sir E. Grey to speak to the Emperor in the same sense in the event of the King being unable to find an opportunity of impressing upon the Emperor the views of His Majesty's Government on the question of naval building programmes.

The King arrived at Cronberg at 9 a.m. on the 11th August and was met by the Emperor and Prince and Princess Frederick Charles of Hesse ;

Herr von Jenisch, in the absence of Baron Schön from illness, was in attendance as Representative of the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Sir F. Lascelles, Ambassador in Berlin, was also present. The King spent the whole morning from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. with the Emperor, but before going to the Emperor's apartments he told me to come to him at one o'clock, when he would tell me how the interview had passed and how he had carried out the wishes of the Government. When I saw the King at one o'clock His Majesty said that the Emperor had been very pleasant and had discussed with him every conceivable question, but that when he had referred to the naval question, mentioning that he had a paper giving the views of His Majesty's Government on the subject, the Emperor neither asked to see the paper nor to know its contents and the King had therefore considered that it would be more tactful on his part not to force upon the Emperor a discussion which he seemed anxious to avoid. Under these circumstances the King wished me to take an opportunity, which I was sure to have, of conversation with the Emperor and to carry out the instructions of His Majesty's Government. The King mentioned to me that he had proposed Sir E. Goschen as successor in Berlin to Sir F. Lascelles and that the Emperor had gladly accepted it, thanking the King at the same time for the withdrawal of Sir F. Cartwright's name. I would mention that there was nothing against Sir F. Cartwright except that when an Attaché at Berlin, at the same time that I was there, he had written quite an amusing novel in which certain members of Berlin Society had been caricatured though not mentioned by name.

While smoking his cigar after luncheon on the terrace of the Castle the Emperor called me up to speak to him. It was a trying moment for me to carry out my instructions as the Emperor's numerous suite together with Sir F. Lascelles formed a group about ten yards distant, and I could see the King sitting in a corner of a small summer-house smoking his cigar and watching me from the corner of his eye.

The Emperor held forth at some length on the relations existing between the two countries which he declared to be quite satisfactory but for the activities of the Yellow Press. When an opening occurred I told the Emperor I could not share his satisfaction as there was an undoubted apprehension in England as to the reason and intention underlying the construction of a large German fleet. Although there was no cause for disagreement between England and Germany it was difficult for thoughtful people to reconcile the friendly assurances of the Emperor and German Government

with the steady increase of the German naval programme which was bound to entail a corresponding increase in our expenditure on naval armaments. It was recognized in England that the execution of the British and German naval programmes, as they then stood, would in a few years' time place the German Navy in a position of supremacy as regards the largest type of battleship, and that unless there was a retardation of the German programme, the Government would have to submit to Parliament an extensive building programme which would only accentuate the rivalry and embitter the relations between the two countries. This might lead to a very critical situation in the event of a trivial dispute arising between England and Germany.

The Emperor at once showed temper. He maintained that the German programme presented no ground for apprehension in England and that no sensible person had ever thought that the German Fleet was intended for an attack upon England. He disputed the figures I had given him of the relative numbers of the two fleets and failed to see any reason for nervousness or for any increase of the British Fleet. As for the German programme, it was a point of national honour to complete it, and no discussion with a foreign government would be tolerated. He would rather go to war than submit to such dictation. The Emperor by this time was distinctly excited, and his suite, together with Sir F. Lascelles, regarded me with consternation, but I determined to stick to my guns!

To prove I was wrong in my statement of the relative strength of the two navies he sent an A.D.C. for a copy of *Nauticus*, which he presented to me for my edification and conviction. (I have this volume which is stamped as the property of the Imperial yacht *Hohenzollern* and I treasure it as a souvenir of the occasion.)

I told the Emperor that I could not accept the figures of *Nauticus* since they included obsolete vessels, but I pointed out the danger to England of invasion which did not exist for Germany since Germany had a large army as well as a large and growing navy. The existence of an immense German fleet at Kiel, within twenty-four hours of the British coast, would constitute a standing menace, and it could not be pleaded that the German Fleet was intended for the protection of German commerce since German trade could not be protected by a fleet lying always at its base.

The Emperor replied with some warmth that the talk of invasion was sheer nonsense and that no serious person in Germany had ever contemplated such an idea. Moreover, it was he that directed the foreign policy

of Germany, and was it likely that he would ever tolerate such an aim for an instant? He complained that it was England that had embarked on building large ships. The first "Dreadnought" had been built in the greatest secrecy and on its completion Admiral Fisher and the Press had at once announced that she was capable of sinking the whole of the German Fleet. Such statements had forced the German Government to commence building ships of a similar type to satisfy public opinion in Germany. He repeated that the German naval programme must be completed by 1918 and that after that date the Navy would be maintained at that strength. As for the British Government, they were, of course, free to build as they pleased.

To that I replied that in that case invasion would always be possible, though, I trusted, not probable, and that although His Majesty's Government had confidence in his peaceful intentions it was always possible that a wave of public opinion might, on some unforeseen pretext, break down all resistance and precipitate a catastrophe such as war between the two countries. This would be all the more likely to happen when a weapon such as the German Navy had been forged at great expense and would cost still more to maintain in an efficient state. I expressed the hope that moderate counsels would still prevail, and that, although discussion between the two Governments might be barred, only a visible proof that the programme of naval construction had been modified or slackened would be required to make a similar slackening on the part of the British Government. Without such a proof a large counter-programme of naval construction would be inevitable.

The conversation, of which I have given only a brief summary, then ceased, but it was amusing to see the angry attitude towards me of the Emperor's suite, who were almost lacking in ordinary civility and would hardly speak to me. To me it was a matter of supreme indifference as the King expressed to me his warm appreciation of the manner in which I had tackled the Emperor. I mentioned, however, later to Herr von Jenisch that the King proposed to mention to the Emperor the possibility of His Majesty and the Queen paying a visit to Berlin the following year, but that if the British public had by that time realized that a competition in naval construction between the two countries was to be initiated, such a visit would become very unpopular in England and might have to be abandoned. This remark reduced Herr von Jenisch to a state of utter consternation, which he did not disguise and which pleased me considerably.

At dinner that evening I was treated with chilly civility by the Emperor's suite, but after dinner, much to their surprise and to mine, the Emperor, who was in the best of humour, called me up, made me sit by him and talked to me for more than an hour until it was time for the King to leave. He talked a lot of nonsense as to his own friendly feelings towards England and how he had helped during the Boer War by sending to Queen Victoria a plan of campaign drawn up by his own General Staff which had been followed by Lord Roberts in all its details. He made other ridiculous statements with which he hoped to fill me up, but the climax was reached just before I left when he told me with great solemnity that the future of the world was in the hands of the Anglo-Teuton race, and that England without a powerful army could not stand alone in Europe but must lean on a Continental Power and that Power should be Germany ! At the same time he offered me the Second Class of the Order of the Red Eagle. I told him I must ask the King, but on my way to the station I mentioned to His Majesty the offer that had been made to me and told him that although I had refused the same decoration a year earlier I thought it would be wise to accept it now and thus to silence those who might say that the Emperor had quarrelled with me. The King agreed and told the Emperor that I might accept the Order. How right I was was proved by the fact that Sir F. Lascelles wrote a despatch to the Foreign Office deploring my conversation with the Emperor to which I was able to produce the unanswerable reply that, far from having offended the Emperor, he had given me a very high decoration !

This was, I think, the most interesting and important interview that I had with the Emperor and the Government expressed to me their warm approval of the manner in which I had carried out their instructions. Although they deplored the uncompromising attitude of the German Government, they felt that it was as well to know the worst and to be prepared for it.

The King left Cronberg at 11 p.m. and arrived at Ischl on the following morning, where he was met by the Emperor of Austria and the Archdukes, Baron d'Aehrenthal being in attendance.

It was pleasant to note the evident warmth of feeling and pleasure at the meeting of the two Sovereigns.

After luncheon at the Imperial Villa I had a conversation with the Emperor in which the relations between England and Austria were discussed as well as the friction which had occurred with Baron d'Aehrenthal. The

Emperor expressed his desire for the closest co-operation between the two countries, especially in the Balkans, and referred with satisfaction to the dismissal of the Palace camarilla at Constantinople by the new Young Turk party. Shortly afterwards the King expressed a desire that I should accompany him for a drive in a motor-car, and to my astonishment I found that he had also insisted on the Emperor of Austria, who hated motor-cars and had never been in one in his life, accompanying him. We went for a long drive through very lovely scenery and I believe the Emperor thoroughly enjoyed it. On inquiry I found that later the Emperor used a motor-car frequently.

Before I went to see Baron d'Aehrenthal I received a private note from him expressing the hope that I would abstain from any recriminations as to the past since he also was not without grievances. I replied that it would, in my opinion, be a waste of time to discuss the past but that I looked forward with pleasure to discussing with him the problems of the present and future.

I had a long conversation with Baron d'Aehrenthal in which all questions relating to the internal situation in Macedonia and the policies of the respective Governments were discussed at length. At its close he said that the rivalry between England and Germany in naval policy did not concern the Austrian Government although they regarded it as not being without an element of danger. He frankly admitted that the attitude of the German Government, if persisted in, might in a few years' time bring about a very critical situation between England and Germany, which it was to everybody's interest to avoid. He said that there existed, however, an under-current in Germany which was strongly opposed to the German naval programme and that owing to the serious financial difficulties of the German Government, this current was daily growing in strength, and he was hopeful that they might in the end find themselves compelled by the force of circumstances to modify the naval law. As the ally of Germany the Austrian Government were seriously preoccupied with this question.

Although Baron d'Aehrenthal's attitude was perfectly friendly, he seemed anxious to obliterate all contrary impressions of the past, and it was evident that he was apprehensive as to possible developments in naval rivalry between England and Germany. Although later in the year I had further correspondence with him in connection with the serious political crisis which he created a few weeks afterwards, I never saw him again as he died a few years later while I was in India. I always liked him, but regarded

At dinner that evening I was treated with chilly civility by the Emperor's suite, but after dinner, much to their surprise and to mine, the Emperor, who was in the best of humour, called me up, made me sit by him and talked to me for more than an hour until it was time for the King to leave. He talked a lot of nonsense as to his own friendly feelings towards England and how he had helped during the Boer War by sending to Queen Victoria a plan of campaign drawn up by his own General Staff which had been followed by Lord Roberts in all its details. He made other ridiculous statements with which he hoped to fill me up, but the climax was reached just before I left when he told me with great solemnity that the future of the world was in the hands of the Anglo-Teuton race, and that England without a powerful army could not stand alone in Europe but must lean on a Continental Power and that Power should be Germany ! At the same time he offered me the Second Class of the Order of the Red Eagle. I told him I must ask the King, but on my way to the station I mentioned to His Majesty the offer that had been made to me and told him that although I had refused the same decoration a year earlier I thought it would be wise to accept it now and thus to silence those who might say that the Emperor had quarrelled with me. The King agreed and told the Emperor that I might accept the Order. How right I was was proved by the fact that Sir F. Lascelles wrote a despatch to the Foreign Office deploring my conversation with the Emperor to which I was able to produce the unanswerable reply that, far from having offended the Emperor, he had given me a very high decoration !

This was, I think, the most interesting and important interview that I had with the Emperor and the Government expressed to me their warm approval of the manner in which I had carried out their instructions. Although they deplored the uncompromising attitude of the German Government, they felt that it was as well to know the worst and to be prepared for it.

The King left Cronberg at 11 p.m. and arrived at Ischl on the following morning, where he was met by the Emperor of Austria and the Archdukes, Baron d'Aehrenthal being in attendance.

It was pleasant to note the evident warmth of feeling and pleasure at the meeting of the two Sovereigns.

After luncheon at the Imperial Villa I had a conversation with the Emperor in which the relations between England and Austria were discussed as well as the friction which had occurred with Baron d'Aehrenthal. The

Emperor expressed his desire for the closest co-operation between the two countries, especially in the Balkans, and referred with satisfaction to the dismissal of the Palace camarilla at Constantinople by the new Young Turk party. Shortly afterwards the King expressed a desire that I should accompany him for a drive in a motor-car, and to my astonishment I found that he had also insisted on the Emperor of Austria, who hated motor-cars and had never been in one in his life, accompanying him. We went for a long drive through very lovely scenery and I believe the Emperor thoroughly enjoyed it. On inquiry I found that later the Emperor used a motor-car frequently.

Before I went to see Baron d'Aehrenthal I received a private note from him expressing the hope that I would abstain from any recriminations as to the past since he also was not without grievances. I replied that it would, in my opinion, be a waste of time to discuss the past but that I looked forward with pleasure to discussing with him the problems of the present and future.

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him as ambitious and therefore dangerous. The King left Ischl for Marienbad the next morning and I returned to London.

Immediately on my return to England I drew up a report for the Cabinet on the interviews at Cronberg and Ischl and I sent a copy to the King at Marienbad. Mr. Asquith, the Prime Minister, met Sir E. Grey in London and discussed my report. They expressed complete satisfaction with the manner in which I had carried out my instructions, and decided that, knowing the worst, the only course for His Majesty's Government to adopt would be to go in for a new programme of shipbuilding the following year.

Sir E. Grey in a letter dated August 23rd wrote :

" I have prepared a paper for the Cabinet about Cronberg and Ischl. You had to take a big fence in broaching the Navy question to the Emperor but it would never have done to let him discuss relations between England and Germany without bringing this in and I entirely approve the way it was done. As the matter was not mentioned by the King, an exceptional responsibility fell upon you. I have purposely not made much of this in the Cabinet paper as it will only raise the question that, however well things have gone hitherto, there is so much responsibility to be faced at these interviews that a Cabinet Minister ought to be present. I should admit this contention to be unanswerable if the responsibility fell upon the King as he can only constitutionally devolve that upon a Cabinet Minister but, as a matter of fact, matters were so arranged that it fell upon you precisely as it does upon an Ambassador and the King was not mixed up in it."

In October 1924 an account appeared in *The Times*, under the heading of " Secret Papers of Tirpitz ", of my interview with the German Emperor at Cronberg which must have been given to him by the Kaiser and which was a fantastic and garbled story. The Foreign Office, therefore, in order that this should not go down to history as the true account of what happened, authorized me to publish in *The Times* my full report of what took place at Cronberg and at the same time to add that the statement made by Admiral von Tirpitz that " at a meeting at Ischl the aged Emperor Francis Joseph was urgently advised to break away from Germany and to save himself by joining the Triple Entente " was absolutely without foundation whatever. This appeared in *The Times* of November 10th, 1924. The Germans have an unblushing way of coining history to their own liking, regardless of facts.

It was during this year that the Foreign Office became convinced of the necessity of supporting British interests in Morocco by obtaining a substantial sum with which to strengthen the position of the Bank of Morocco,

and Sir Edward Grey decided to apply in the first instance to Sir E. Cassel, the financier, to make a loan of half a million to that institution. He asked me to be present during the interview. After explaining the situation Sir E. Grey made his proposal which Sir E. Cassel accepted without demur, except on one condition, and that was that he should be made a G.C.B. Grey accepted this quite calmly, saying that it was not in his power to make a definite promise but that he would submit the matter to the Prime Minister.

I flatter myself that I got even with Cassel later though he did not know it. He, Lord Revelstoke and Lord Faringdon wished to create the National Bank of Turkey, and Sir E. Cassel offered me the appointment of Head of the Bank in Turkey with a salary of three to four thousand a year. Naturally I declined the offer as I had no desire to leave the public service. He asked me if I could recommend anybody and I put forward the name of Sir H. Babington Smith. The latter came to see me to ask my advice on certain matters and especially as to the salary he should demand. Upon that point I strongly recommended him to refuse to accept the appointment with a salary of less than £10,000 a year. He related to me afterwards his interview in Cassel's bedroom as he was in bed with a chill. After a long discussion of the operations, etc., of the proposed Bank, etc., Babington Smith inquired as to salary. He was offered £3,000 a year with certain extras. He declined the post and on being asked what salary he desired, he claimed not less than £10,000 a year and left the room. He told me that Cassel's face was a picture of astonishment, but within twenty-four hours he was offered the salary that he claimed, and accepted the post, which he held till the outbreak of war with Turkey. This little transaction gave me great pleasure as a set-off to Cassel's G.C.B.

Peace and quiet reigned in Europe for six weeks after the King's visit to Ischl, until d'Aehrenthal without warning exploded a bomb in the Near East which created a most serious political crisis lasting nearly six months, which might easily have provoked a European war, and which, in my opinion, was the indirect cause of the Great War which broke out six years later.

On October 3rd I received a visit from Count Mensdorff when he handed to me a letter from Baron d'Aehrenthal that he had brought with him from Vienna. It was dated September 28th and announced to me the decision of the Austrian Government to proclaim very shortly the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina while renouncing any share in the further occupation of the Sanjak of Novi Bazar. It was a great surprise to me.

The reasons given were the necessity of giving these two provinces constitutional government and the intrigues which the Servians were said to be carrying on in Bosnia. He told me that he was leaving the next day for Balmoral to present to the King a private letter from the Emperor of Austria in which the latter announced the intention of his Government. When Mensdorff asked my opinion on this development I warned him that I could not help feeling anxious as to the consequences of the annexation which might entail other developments in Eastern Europe such as giving encouragement to Bulgaria to declare her independence, and provoking Servia and Greece to claim compensation elsewhere. I remarked that it was very strange that when King Edward visited the Emperor of Austria less than two months before not a word was said by d'Aehrenthal to His Majesty or to me giving any indication that such a *coup* was in prospect. Moreover, the precedent of the violation of a Treaty without the consent of the other signatories was one which could only be regarded as an offence against public morality and would tend to produce a state of chaos and anarchy in Europe and throughout the world. I warned him at the same time that I did not think the news would be palatable to the King and that he might expect a cool reception at Balmoral. As a matter of fact he got a very hot reception from the King, who was furious at the suddenness of d'Aehrenthal's decision, taken, as he considered, without any real reason. He was frantic with d'Aehrenthal and every day grew more and more angry with him, and visited all his wrath on poor Mensdorff, who was quite incapable of explaining or meeting a situation of such difficulty. While hardly grasping the serious character of the situation, he whined over the discomfort of his own position which his Government had created.

That my fears were well founded was proved by the fact that, whether there was collusion or not between Austria and Bulgaria, the latter country declared her independence at Tirnova two days before the publication of the Imperial proclamation announcing the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, while the Cretan Assembly at once proclaimed the annexation of the island to Greece. These acts were also followed by demands for compensation by Servia and Montenegro.

As a matter of fact, when Count Kevenhuller, Austrian Ambassador in Paris, announced to President Fallières that annexation had been decided on, the latter replied, "I suppose this will be followed by the independence of Bulgaria," to which Kevenhuller answered, "No. It will be preceded."

This was regarded as a clear proof of collusion between Austria and

Bulgaria, but a year later I was able to ascertain that the Austrian Government held the key to the Bulgarian cyphers and had decyphered all the telegrams passing between Prince Ferdinand and his Government at Timovo. Consequently it is possible that the action of the Bulgarian Government was spontaneous. Moreover, there is no doubt that the Bulgarian Government had for some time been considering the question of declaring the independence of Bulgaria, for during the summer Isvolsky had been sounded by them as to the prospect of Russian support in the event of such a declaration. His answer was : "Get rid of Ferdinand and you may be sure of Russian support."

There were at this time some amusing stories current of Prince Ferdinand, whose character was well known. Before the declaration of Bulgarian independence he had visited the Emperor of Austria at Pesth, his sole object being to obtain from him the coveted decoration of the "Golden Fleece". At his interview with the Emperor, which only lasted fifteen minutes, he personally pressed his claim, and was told that it could not be granted on account of his quarrel with Rome over the conversion of his son from the Roman Catholic to the Orthodox faith. He came out foaming with rage against "*cette maison d'Autriche qui me traite comme un chien, etc.*" After his interview with d'Aehrenthal he was more furious than ever with "*ce sale juif digne ministre de cette maison d'Autriche*". A few days later he met some of his Ministers, who urged him to proclaim the independence of Bulgaria, saying that, unless he did so, they could not answer for the consequences to the dynasty. He then decided to leave for Bulgaria and motored to a station south of Pesth to catch the Orient express so as to escape recognition. The train was quite full and the Prince afterwards, describing his journey, said : "*Pour ne pas être reconnu j'ai dû faire la plupart de ce voyage dans le water-closet. Voilà les dessous de la Royauté !*" When King Edward heard these stories he wrote to me, "I fully believe everything stated relating to King Ferdinand's conduct to be true. Much of it has been known to me already for some time as he is renowned, when his wishes are not entertained, to use the coarsest language in the most undignified manner."

It was generally rumoured that the Archduke Franz Ferdinand had been the instigator of d'Aehrenthal in the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but on the other hand the rumour was denied, and it was stated that the plan had been hatched by the Archduchess Isabel through Mme d'Aehrenthal and her sister Countess Wimpffen, who was lady-in-waiting to the Arch-

duchess, the annexation being designed as a sort of Jubilee present to the Emperor who, during his reign, had lost large tracts of territory. Whether this was the true motive or not, one can only say that the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was the precursor of the destruction of the Austrian Empire and of the position of the Imperial Family.

Mensdorff had told me that at Vienna it was anticipated that neither Russia nor Italy would object to the annexation, but if that was the official Austrian impression it was entirely erroneous. M. Isvolsky took it very seriously since he had had an interview with d'Aehrenthal only a few days earlier at Buchlau, when it appears he had been asked to agree to the annexation in return for an assurance of support should Russia raise the question of the opening of the Dardanelles. It was not clear whether Isvolsky definitely agreed or not, but since the annexation was resented by public opinion in Russia, he objected to being exposed to European public opinion as a Minister who had been completely duped by d'Aehrenthal. He consequently tried to be as disagreeable as possible towards Austria and proposed a Conference of the Powers to consider the question. To this the Austrian Government naturally objected and pressed for the more important questions involved to form in the first instance the subject of a preliminary and direct discussion between the Powers themselves. A week after these events Isvolsky arrived in London and had interviews with Sir E. Grey and me. The Government accepted the idea of a Conference in principle and Isvolsky then pressed hard for the revision of the clauses of the Treaty of 1856 relating to the Dardanelles and that Russian ships of war should be allowed to pass freely up and down the Straits. The Prime Minister and Grey were ready to accept this proposal, largely because Isvolsky declared that unless he returned to Russia with a concession of this nature, his fall was certain, but the Cabinet having turned it down at first came eventually to an agreement with Isvolsky for a modification of the Treaty of 1856 whenever a suitable moment should arise for raising the question.

The news of the annexation was received in Turkey with a storm of indignation against Austria. Demands for compensation were made and refused, a boycott of Austrian goods and shipping was enforced and relations between Austria and Turkey became very strained. In spite of all the resentment that was felt no sane person believed war possible between the two countries.

The Cretan incident was met by the despatch of a British squadron to the island of Marmarice which had an undoubted, though not a calculated,

effect on the maintenance of peace, since the presence of the squadron prevented an Austrian naval descent upon Turkey in the exasperation felt by Austria at the boycott of her ships and goods.

Claims for compensation were also made by Serbia and Montenegro and negotiations between the Powers were prolonged till the spring of the following year, during which period there were moments when there was great risk of an outbreak of war. The situation between Turkey and Austria and Bulgaria was eventually met by a compromise in the payment of about 2½ million pounds to Turkey by Austria as compensation and of four million pounds by Bulgaria and with the concession of economic rights to Serbia and Montenegro.

It was in March 1909 that the danger of war between the Dual Monarchy and Serbia became really acute, since Serbia would not consent to negotiate with Austria but wished her case to be submitted to the Powers, a course which Austria refused to admit. In the meantime, warlike preparations continued on both sides and it was only on the 22nd March, the day before the Austrian Government intended to launch its ultimatum to Serbia, that a satisfactory formula of agreement was found through the mediation of Sir E. Grey, and peace was assured.

During these months the rôle of the Foreign Office, warmly supported by the King, was to secure the maintenance of peace, and the adjustment of claims and differences between the Powers. It was no easy task, since not only had the Foreign Office to deal with the claimants themselves but with the Powers that supported them, and the rivalry between the latter was so great that it often seemed impossible to arrive at a general compromise. However, the negotiations between the individual groups proceeded slowly and in the end surely, and were concluded and ratified by the Powers. Count Metternich, the German Ambassador, always played a sinister rôle, pretending to support British policy in endeavouring to find a peaceful settlement, but all the time pressing the Austrian point of view and combatting any concessions to Serbia and Montenegro. The Italian Ambassador, Marquis Imperiali, in pressing Montenegro's claims was also a difficult person to handle, thanks to the exuberance of his personality and his naturally fiery temper. Still, he was a delightful colleague to deal with and I have a happy recollection of my relations with him.

In the midst of the political crisis arising from the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the German Emperor created a pleasant diversion for European diplomacy by an article which appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*

of October 28th, reporting the interview of a so-called diplomatist¹ with the Emperor William. In the course of the conversation that was stated to have taken place between them the Kaiser tried to stir up dissension between France, Russia and England by repeating his well-known fable of efforts made by France and Russia to intervene in the Boer War, which he alleged he had frustrated, and by references to the situation in Morocco. As a matter of fact, no such interview ever took place, but the account was written by somebody and corrected by the Emperor in his own handwriting and sent to the *Daily Telegraph* in a letter from himself to Lord Burnham. The interview contained most of the absurd statements of his friendly attitude towards England which he made to me in my interview with His Majesty at Cronberg. The publication of this alleged conversation produced the greatest sensation in Germany and exposed him to very severe criticism, while in England it was received with the greatest calm. So serious was the situation created in Germany that the Chancellor, Prince Bülow, tendered his resignation to the Emperor as well as Herr von Schön, the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Emperor refused to accept Prince Bülow's resignation, and the latter invented a series of lies to cover up the Emperor's tracks. Both the Emperor and Bülow were attacked with violence in the Reichstag and Prince Bülow had to assure Parliament that in future the Emperor would observe that reserve even in private conversations which was indispensable for the authority of the Crown.

This, however, was not the only indiscretion at that time of the Emperor, whose mind was seething with jealousy of his uncle the King, anger at the successful interview at Reval, and fear as to its consequences. It appears that the Emperor gave an interview to a correspondent of the *Century Magazine*, published in America, who approached him disguised as a Methodist minister. To him the Emperor is represented to have expressed the greatest contempt for the King of England and his entourage; to have stated that England was rotten and marching to her ruin and ought to be wiped out, and that he considered war between Germany and England as inevitable, and to have said "Let it come!" He also abused the Vatican; it is supposed because he thought it would be pleasing to a Methodist minister, which he believed his interlocutor to be. After a few copies had been sold the magazine was withdrawn, but enough were found to spread the story widely.

¹ Really Major-General the Hon. E. Stuart-Wortley, at whose house, Highcliffe Castle, the Kaiser had stayed in the previous autumn.

All these incidents reduced the Kaiser to a state of the deepest depression, alternating with fits of fury or hysterical weeping, and his state of mind at the time may be gauged by the following incident. At the beginning of December, Queen Alexandra received a telegram from him asking how was the King's cold. The Queen replied saying that the King was much better but that she had heard that the Emperor himself was suffering from cold and she hoped that that also was better. To this the Emperor promptly replied: "I am not suffering from cold, but from complete collapse." This amazing admission was sent *en clair* for all the telegraphists in Germany and England to read! It only showed the state of his mind at the time. In dealing with these matters King Edward wrote to me, "We do live in marvellous times."

It was in November 1908 that the German Emperor announced his intended visit to the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and the Emperor of Austria, just at the moment of very critical negotiations between the Balkan States and Austria relating to the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The visit was regarded as an incentive to Austria to persevere in her reckless attitude towards the minor Balkan States. The King in a letter dated November 5th wrote: "This visit of the German Emperor to the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and afterwards to the Emperor is much to be deprecated at the present moment and is the height of bad taste! We are certainly living in critical times. Peace may be maintained, but only because Europe is *afraid* to go to war."

CHAPTER XIII

L O N D O N , 1 9 0 9

WHILE at the opening of the year 1909 the Austro-Turkish dispute over Bosnia and Herzegovina grew less intense, the crisis with regard to Serbia and to the recognition of Bulgarian independence increased rapidly to danger point. In consequence of the sympathy shown towards Serbia in Great Britain the attacks made on England and the King by the Austrian Press became every day more bitter and in January Sir F. Cartwright received instructions to remonstrate with d'Aehrenthal and a temporary improvement followed. This lasted but a short time and King Edward's patience became gradually exhausted and he wrote: "It is a perfect scandal the way in which the Austrian Press continues to attack England and to spread the most abominable lies about her foreign policy. Mensdorff should again be spoken to seriously on the subject as it could be stopped by the Austrian Government, but poor Mensdorff has no pluck whatever." In spite of representations both in London and Vienna it was only some months later when the political situation had been stabilized that the Press relations between the two countries became normal once more.

It was while staying at Windsor Castle in January 1909 that Lord Knollys, mentioning the fact that Lord Minto's term of office as Viceroy of India would expire towards the end of the following year, asked me how I would like to be his successor. I replied at once that to be Viceroy of India would be the fulfilment of my highest ambition and the realization of an aim to which I had hardly dared to aspire, but that there could be no question about it and I would accept the post with the greatest joy. On the 1st February I received a letter from Lord Knollys in the following words:

"On consideration I thought I should be acting in your interest if I were to mention your name to the King in connection with the Viceroyalty of India. He approved of the idea as I thought he would, and it is a good thing to have him on your side. He was very kind about it, and said he should be very sorry to lose you at the Foreign Office but thought you would

do India very well, and that 'you would *look the part*'." The only person to whom I mentioned this conversation with and letter from Knollys was my wife, but I told her at the time, and never changed my opinion during the many ups and downs of my prospects during the following year, that I felt quite certain that I would get the post, and maintained my conviction at moments when things looked rather hopeless. I never imagined that in the end opposition would arise from the King, nor the sad circumstances under which my hopes would materialize.

At the beginning of February 1909 King Edward and Queen Alexandra paid an official visit to the German Emperor in Berlin with great pomp and ceremony. I had the honour to accompany Their Majesties. The first arrival was not propitious as the horses of the gala carriage in which Queen Alexandra was driving to the Palace, accompanied by the German Empress, jibbed and reared, and the two Sovereigns had to leave the carriage and continue their journey in an ordinary carriage of the suite. The Emperor was furious over this incident and threatened to dismiss his Master of the Horse, and the Queen was, I think, secretly pleased at the contretemps, for she had hated the idea of going to Berlin and had complained of being dragged there. She particularly disliked the Emperor and Empress. I wish however to record here the fact of her great success during the visit. She was looking particularly well at the time, and had a useful foil in the German Empress, who was much younger and looked old enough to be her mother.

During the three days' visit of the King and Queen to Berlin there were endless Court functions, each of increasing splendour. The Court Ball at the Schloss was in effect a ballet in which the young officers of the various regiments of the Guard in uniform with young ladies of Society dressed alike in the regimental colours took part, one regiment succeeding another. It was a wonderful and pretty sight, like a military manoeuvre, and some of the girls who took part in it told me they had been practising for weeks.

The most useful function in which the King took part was a reception by the Municipal Authorities at the Rath Haus. He met there the leading merchants and business men of Berlin, who hated him by name but whom he captivated by his charm and cordial manner.

An incident occurred after luncheon given at the British Embassy to the King which filled me with alarm and which was, in my opinion, the forerunner of disaster. The King was wearing a Prussian uniform

and while sitting on a sofa talking to Princess Pless I noticed that he suddenly fell backwards with his eyes closed, and I thought he had had a stroke. I rushed to him and unfastened his collar and ran to fetch his doctor who was in the next room. The King came round almost at once, and the doctor, Sir James Reid, treated the incident in a very casual manner, stating that it was simply a form of bronchial attack and in no sense dangerous. I did not believe him but wrote at once to Lord Knollys to inform him of what had taken place and expressed to him my fears for the King and my doubts as to the doctor's diagnosis. I was full of forebodings, which in the end were justified. Owing to this incident some of the King's engagements were modified and I was very glad when His Majesty reached England safely on his return.

An amusing little incident occurred on the homeward journey. Princess Pless had rather tried to monopolize the King at Berlin and he did not appear to relish so much attention from her. We left Berlin by train at ten o'clock at night, but in the previous morning I had received a message from Princess Pless asking that the Royal train might be stopped at Spandau so that she might there take leave of the King. I asked what His Majesty's wishes were, and he told me to give orders that the train was not to stop but to proceed at a snail's pace through the station at Spandau. On arrival there I looked out of the window and saw Princess Pless alone on the platform in heavy furs, and glancing into the King's saloon I could see His Majesty peeping through the curtains and smiling at the Princess's evident discomfiture at the train not stopping.

I learned later that Princess Pless had bothered the King to allow a quack doctor to come to do something to his throat to relieve his bronchial trouble, but that the King did not wish to see him, and the Emperor when he heard of it had said that he would have the man kicked out by his footmen if he came. She had then applied to Sir F. Ponsonby to arrange for the train to be stopped outside Berlin so that she might bring the doctor into the train, but this was flatly refused. Consequently she came alone.

During our stay in Berlin I had a long interview with Prince Bülow of more than an hour and a half when we discussed all the political events of the day. He was very friendly and conciliatory, which was explained to me by a member of the German Foreign Office as due to the alarm he felt at the hostile trend of public opinion in Germany towards England and France for which he had been directly responsible in the past and which he felt to be gradually growing beyond his control. It was there-

fore in his own interest as well as in the interest of German relations with England and France to check the animosity which he had himself encouraged. I ascertained however on good authority that the Emperor and Imperial Family entertained the greatest mistrust of Prince Bülow and that his fall in the near future was probable.

The conclusion of the crisis over the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria was immediately followed by a counter-revolution in Turkey, due largely to dissatisfaction on the part of the Young Turks that Kiamil Pasha, the Grand Vizier, acted independently of them. He was eventually deposed by the new Turkish Parliament under the influence of the Committee of Union and Progress and a reactionary Government established. The new Government was, however, opposed by a society called "the Mahomedan Union", whose watchword was that Islam was in danger, and this society was supported by those to whom the arbitrary proceedings of the Committee of Union and Progress had become distasteful, and a new and colourless Government was formed. The garrison of Salonica refused however to accept this *coup d'état* and marched on Constantinople. After some fighting with the garrison of Constantinople, the Salonica force gained the upper hand and deposed the Sultan Abdul Hamid on the 4th April, sending him and his family into exile. A new Sultan was appointed under the title of Mehmed V. The C.U.P. became once more supreme, and although the Augean stable still required cleansing, Turkey assumed for a time the nationalist character of a European state, and certain improvements were visible which would never have been secured under the corrupt and personal autocracy of Abdul Hamid. Still Turkey, under a Parliamentary Government, required a strong and judicious hand to control its policy, but it was the Army under the direction of a corrupt Committee of Jews and aliens that dominated the situation. When Sultan Abdul Hamid fell I had known him for nearly thirty years, and I must confess that I had a sneaking sympathy for a man who, however ruthless in his methods and unscrupulous in his policy, had succeeded in holding Europe at bay during all those years by playing off one Power against another with a cynical disregard of consequences except where he himself might be affected.

In March 1909 Baron Kiderlen-Waechter, German Minister in Bucharest, the confidant of Prince Bülow, and who was working temporarily at the Foreign Office in Berlin, made proposals to Sir E. Goschen, our Ambassador in Berlin, whereby an increase of the naval strength on both

sides might become a source of satisfaction rather than of suspicion to both England and Germany. He proposed that both countries should bind themselves (1) not to make war, (2) to join in no coalition against either Power ; and (3) to observe a benevolent neutrality should either country be engaged in hostilities with any other Power or Powers. In a memorandum which I wrote on the whole question of our international relations in Europe I dealt with this proposal and wrote :

“Were His Majesty’s Government to fall into a trap of this kind, the duration of the agreement would be strenuously employed by Germany to consolidate her supremacy in Europe, while England would remain as a spectator with her hands tied. At the termination of the agreement, Germany would be free to devote her whole strength to reducing the only remaining independent factor in Europe, and if, relying upon a profusion of friendly assurances from Germany, which public opinion is always only too ready to believe and to accept as genuine, England had in the meantime neglected to maintain an absolutely predominant naval supremacy, she would richly deserve the fate which would inevitably await her, and compel her for the first time in history to take her place amongst the satellites of the German constellation. Moreover the mere announcement that England had concluded such an agreement with Germany would result in her immediate isolation and would entail a loss of prestige and of any confidence for the future in her loyalty and friendship. Although it is unthinkable that any Government should ever be duped by such a transparent proposal as that made by Baron Kiderlen, which would not have been put forward without Prince Bülow’s knowledge and approval, it is as well that its dangerous character should be revealed, and that the disastrous consequences which its adoption would entail should be fully realized.”

On this Sir E. Grey noted, “I agree with this paper, which is very ably stated”, while Mr. Asquith, the Prime Minister, wrote : “This is an able paper, worth thinking over : especially the last pages.” On this proposal the King wrote : “Great caution should be taken regarding Kiderlen-Waechter’s words. He is not to be trusted and is, besides, Bülow’s mouthpiece, who doubtless carefully instructed him to say what he did to Goschen and endeavour to ‘throw dust in his eyes’ !”

There is no doubt that during these years the naval question loomed like a heavy cloud over the relations between England and Germany. We had absolutely no question at issue with Germany, except the minor controversy of participation in the Bagdad Railway, and had it not been for the strenuous naval competition initiated by Germany, there was no

apparent cause for disturbance in Europe for the next ten years, and no need for the large naval programme that England was forced by Germany to adopt in order to maintain the security of her shores. If there had been any indication of delay in the execution of the German naval programme, the strain would have been alleviated, but the fact that the Germans accelerated their programme and that the German Government refused to allow our Naval Attaché to go anywhere where shipbuilding was in progress, convinced the Government and the nation of the hostile intentions of Germany and of the danger they would run in the future unless a British fleet was maintained which Germany would realize to be impregnable. The policy of His Majesty's Government was more than justified by the events of the Great War.

In June 1909 Holstein, the "hidden hand" of the German Foreign Office, and the confidant of Prince Bülow, died, and a month later the latter resigned his office and was succeeded by Bethmann-Hollweg of the "scrap of paper" fame.

Bethmann-Hollweg took up the question of an agreement with England on precisely the same lines as those proposed by Kiderlen-Waechter, but the German Government were plainly informed that no agreement was possible without a reduction of the German naval programme, and the question was put on one side and given an *enterrement de première classe* owing to the imminence of a general election in England.

The Emperor of Russia paid a private and return visit to the King during the week of the Cowes Regatta, the King and Queen being on the Royal yacht *Victoria and Albert* and the Emperor and Empress with all their family on board the Imperial yacht *Polar Star*. My wife and I received an invitation to luncheon on board the *Polar Star*. When talking to the Emperor after luncheon he reproached me for having left the Embassy three years earlier, but I reminded His Majesty that, at my farewell audience at Tsarskoe Selo, I had explained to him that one of the reasons why I had accepted the post of Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office was that I was most anxious to bring about an agreement with Russia, and that I knew I would be in a stronger position to do so than if I remained Ambassador at St. Petersburg, and I added that events had proved that I had been right. The Emperor replied, laughing, "Yes. I remember it perfectly and you were absolutely right, but I don't mind telling you now that I did not believe a single word you said!"

While in Austria the Czar's visit to Cowes was regarded as a further

guarantee of the peace of the world, relations between Austria and Russia during 1909 could hardly have been worse while in a state of peace. This was largely due to personal antagonism between Isvolsky and d'Aehrenthal which made any *rapprochement* between the two countries impossible. Isvolsky told Sir F. Cartwright that he had been deceived outrageously by d'Aehrenthal at every turn and that he regarded himself as "the innocent lamb destroyed by the wicked wolf!" (there was not much innocence about Isvolsky). This state of tension was favoured by Germany, who wished Austria to feel that she must lean on Germany absolutely and solely in everything. A proposal was made that England and France should use their good offices to mediate between Austria and Russia, but Sir E. Grey turned it down and wrote to me: "I should certainly welcome better relations between Russia and Austria, but for us to mediate between these two Powers would probably end in our gaining the thanks of neither, and in our action being resented by Germany as an intrigue to isolate her. We do not however want to be on bad terms with Austria, and it is desirable to be as civil to her as we can without entangling ourselves." Nothing could have been sounder than such a policy at that time.

In view of what happened later it is of interest that in a letter to Lord Bryce (Ambassador in Washington) of February 26th, 1909, I wrote, "It is very difficult to say whether we shall succeed in averting an attack by Austria on Servia. Our great difficulty is the fierce personal animosity between Isvolsky and d'Aehrenthal."

In Austrian political circles considerable anxiety was felt whether King Edward would pay his usual visit to Marienbad in the autumn of 1909 as failure to do so would undoubtedly be attributed only to political reasons. King Edward never had any intention of doing otherwise. As soon as it was known that the visit would take place, efforts were made to arrange an interview with the Emperor of Austria at Ischl, which the King was quite ready and willing to have on the invitation of the Emperor to visit him at Ischl on his way to Marienbad. Such a course was the usual one. On the other hand, d'Aehrenthal wished King Edward to express a desire to meet the Emperor in order that this step might be regarded as an *amende honorable* on the part of the King after the events of the previous winter. As d'Aehrenthal showed reluctance to advise the Emperor to send an invitation to the King, and as the King very properly declined to propose himself for a visit to the Emperor, the idea of a meeting had to be abandoned. It was

unfortunate as the two Sovereigns, who had a mutual affection and respect for each other, never met again.

An event of very great international importance occurred during the year 1909 in the conclusion of an agreement between the French and Italian Governments by which Italy bound herself not to co-operate with Germany in a war against France, and in such an event both Powers agreed to withdraw their troops from the Franco-Italian frontier. This, as events proved five years later, was a fact of the highest importance and naturally the agreement gave offence to both Germany and Austria, the allies of Italy. It would at that time have required but a small effort to persuade Italy to renounce her alliance with Germany and Austria, but it was recognized both in London and Paris that it would be of distinct advantage to England and France that Italy should remain in the Triple Alliance and thus become a source of weakness to it.

During that year there was a terrible earthquake at Messina in which an enormous number of lives were lost and much property destroyed. The British Fleet in the Mediterranean gave great assistance and provided about £8,000 of stores for the starving inhabitants. The King of Italy wished to give medals to all the officers of the Fleet, but the Foreign Office very properly objected and they were not distributed. I was however amused when 1½ years later I received in India, as Head of the Government of India, a gold medal from the King of Italy with Foreign Office permission to wear it ! I need hardly say that it was never worn.

King Edward had rather foreign ideas about decorations. He liked people to be plastered with them and could not understand anybody thinking otherwise. He told me on one occasion that he proposed to give the G.C.V.O. to Sir E. Grey. Knowing Grey's feelings and contempt for decorations, I begged His Majesty not to do so as I knew that Grey would not like it. I thought I had convinced the King, but about six months later His Majesty expressed to me his annoyance that, having offered the G.C.V.O. to Sir E. Grey, the latter had respectfully but firmly declined it. The King's annoyance was extreme and I do not think he ever quite forgave Sir E. Grey for having declined this Order. Sir E. Grey's grounds for refusal were that he did not care about Orders and he did not think it right for Cabinet Ministers to receive them. Yet a few years later he accepted the Garter while still a Cabinet Minister ! which, however, I learnt later, had been bestowed upon him in answer to attacks made upon him as Foreign Secretary by the German Government and Press.

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As for myself, I had an amusing conversation with the King on the subject of decorations after I had received the Grand Cross of the Red Eagle on the occasion of the King's visit to Berlin. The King was very pleased at my receiving it and said he hoped that I would often wear it. I had already many other foreign decorations and I said in reply to the King that I hoped His Majesty would give me permission not to wear any foreign decorations as I only cared to wear those bestowed upon me by Queen Victoria and himself. The King was very surprised and remarked that he thought my request very extraordinary, that most people asked for permission to wear foreign Orders and that I was the first to ask his permission not to wear them. He told me he could not understand it and was really quite sad over my shortcomings, but eventually acceded to my request.

It was in the autumn of 1909 that I had my one and only conflict of opinion with King Edward. While Mr. Haldane was in attendance upon the King at Balmoral and Secretary of State for War he asked the King's permission to send the Guards' Band to Cologne to play in public at the request of the Mayor of Cologne. Sir E. Grey was away in the North fishing and I was in charge of the Foreign Office. Mr. Haldane had not consulted Sir E. Grey and as soon as I heard that permission had been granted by the King, pointed out to Mr. Haldane that the Foreign Office had not been consulted as it should have been, that I knew Sir E. Grey would disapprove since similar requests made from France had been refused and that in the meantime the departure of the band should be delayed. I wrote at once to Sir E. Grey, who replied that he was opposed to the Band going to Germany and I told Mr. Haldane of Grey's objections. Mr. Haldane told the King, who was very angry and poured all the vials of his wrath on my poor head. For three weeks angry telegrams came every other day to the Foreign Office, but Sir E. Grey supported me stoutly throughout. An amusing sidelight was that twice a week I received a haunch of venison from the King at Balmoral till I could hardly bear mention of the word venison without a feeling of nausea. A lady visitor at Balmoral told me afterwards that the King had told her and another lady how angry he was with me, and that he was so excited that he walked up and down the room saying, "Am I King or am I not!" Shortly afterwards I received an invitation from Sir Ernest Cassel to meet the King and shoot partridges at Moulton Paddocks, his place near Newmarket. As I knew I could only have been invited on the King's initiative or with his approval, I accepted the invitation. I took care to arrive early before the King, as I did not

wish to have an explanation with His Majesty before the assembled company. Immediately after the arrival of the King I asked his Equerry to arrange, if possible, for an interview with His Majesty before dinner. I was told that the King would see me at 7.45. I took the precaution of dressing for dinner first, which was fortunate as the King purposely kept me waiting as a penance in the ante-room till 8.30. When I was shown into the room I found the King standing in the middle and without any greeting he said to me rather abruptly, "What do you want?" I told him that I had come to express my regret that I had displeased him, etc. All he said was, "I am very angry, very angry with you," and repeated it several times. I continued to explain that I had had no axe to grind, that my action had been taken in the public interest, etc., and while he was still reproaching me I gradually turned the conversation into another channel, giving him some information which I knew would interest him, and he became quite cheerful and very nice. As he went into dinner he passed my wife and, laughing, said to her: "Charlie does not like German bands or bands in Germany."

During the course of 1909 I sat as Chairman on two very important and interesting sub-Committees of the Committee of Imperial Defence. One dealt with the principles that were to govern naval and military co-operation between Great Britain and the Self-Governing Dominions; and the second dealt with the extent and treatment of foreign espionage in Great Britain and Ireland. The latter question interested me profoundly since as Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office I was kept fully informed of all the proceedings of foreign spies in this country.

One of my most interesting documents was a map of Great Britain on which there was a red spot everywhere to indicate the presence of a German spy. There were over 600 red spots! All these were carefully watched and in many cases we succeeded in ascertaining their instructions from the German Government and what duties they were to perform in case of war. I was in India when war broke out, but one of my first inquiries on my return was as to the fate of these 600 and more spies. I was told that about 300 of them left for Germany during the days immediately preceding the declaration of war, and that hands were laid on the remainder before they could do any such damage as blowing up bridges, railways, etc., which we knew to be within the instructions they had received. And yet Prince Albert of Schleswig-Holstein, the son of Prince Christian, dared to state in London that the Chief of the German Staff had given him his word of

honour that they had not one single paid secret agent in Great Britain ! If true, the German Chief of the Staff was an unblushing liar !

The Germans certainly had no luck. That year a Frenchman was travelling from Hamburg to Paris and had a black handbag. A German got into the carriage with a black handbag somewhat similar in appearance. After a few stations the German left the train and by mistake took the Frenchman's bag, leaving his own in the carriage. The Frenchman opened the German's bag and found in it complete plans for the invasion of England. He set to work and before reaching the frontier had copied out the whole of the plans, which came into our possession, and left the bag in the train. They were most complete. They provided for the disembarkation of three Army Corps on the north coast of Norfolk, simultaneously with a feint at Deal. They gave details of all the railway tunnels, bridges, and crossings which were to be blown up immediately before the declaration of war by what they called "standing companies", presumably bands of Germans organized in this country. This destruction was to prevent concentration in the Midland Counties of troops from Aldershot and Salisbury Plain, and the plan pointed out that if Bedford and Cambridge could be seized by a dash, London would be at the mercy of the invaders. In one of the concluding paragraphs it was stated that the plan had received the approval of the "Council". What that Council was we did not know, but we imagined it to be a sort of military and naval council. Truly, a pleasant revelation !

CHAPTER XIV

L O N D O N , 1 9 1 0

AFTER the tension of the earlier part of 1909 the year 1910 opened quietly and peacefully, and had it not been for the ever-present menace of German naval activity and the domineering attitude of German policy, the European outlook might well have been described as eminently peaceful, questions at issue between Governments being more or less personal and by no means acute. The dominant feeling in England was anxiety as to the naval intentions of Germany, where warships were being built at a rate which would necessitate the construction of fifty first-class battleships by Great Britain within the following few years in order to keep ahead of the German naval programme. The burden of taxation that shipbuilding on such a scale would entail was felt to be insupportable. It seemed as though a dense and heavy cloud hung over and darkened Anglo-German relations which nothing could dissipate except a modification or relaxation of the German naval programme. During the election campaign at the beginning of 1910 there was a great deal of plain speaking at the hustings as to the attitude of Germany and the necessity of maintaining a sufficiently large fleet to secure England from the risk of invasion, a policy which received general support. These criticisms of Germany in election speeches, necessary as they were, proved very distasteful to the German Emperor and German Government, who still harped on the possibility of arriving at an agreement on a policy of naval construction, and seemed to fail to understand that no British Government could possibly come to terms with Germany so long as she maintained her decision to carry out her naval programme in full.

The Emperor, who complained freely of the British Government and Press, said he could not understand the necessity of Great Britain having a very strong fleet, remarking that he would never invade England and ridiculed the idea of doing so. To these statements Sir E. Grey remarked that if Germany once had a fleet stronger than ours, German public opinion

and the German Press would not allow the Kaiser to retain a Chancellor who did not humiliate England in any controversy that might arise between the two countries.

Apart from the naval question, the issue of the elections in 1910 was regarded with considerable apprehension in Germany since tariff reform was an important plank in the platform of the Conservative Party. M. Tchirsky, German Ambassador in Vienna, told Dr. Szepps, the Editor of the *Fremdenblatt*, that if tariff reform came into force in England its effects would be so disastrous to Germany that the anti-British current would run stronger than ever, and this would bring about a situation of so strained a character that the least incident might lead to an outbreak of hostilities. The German Emperor was even more frank, for he told Laszlo the painter, when sitting for his picture in the spring of 1909, that Germany would make war upon England if tariff reform were introduced !

As I have already stated, causes of friction between European Governments were more personal than serious and not really acute. The controversy between d'Aehrenthal and Isvolsky still had a baneful influence on Austro-Russian relations, and these were not improved by Isvolsky's proceedings in publishing in the Press confidential documents relating to pending negotiations between himself and d'Aehrenthal without even asking for the customary consent and approval. It was rather a serious breach of diplomatic etiquette. It was, however, realized by the two Governments that the absence of friendly relations between Austria and Russia would inevitably entail trouble in the Near East, and finally an agreement was made that no more recriminatory documents relating to the annexation crisis and its origin should be published on either side. King Ferdinand drew a happy distinction between the two statesmen in his remark to Sir M. Findlay : "M. Isvolsky est subjectif tandis que M. d'Aehrenthal est surtout objectif."

When d'Aehrenthal and I were both Ambassadors in Russia he made no secret to me of his pro-Russian and anti-German sentiments, and on his assuming office as Minister for Foreign Affairs at Vienna it was not long before he began to kick against German domination of Austria and to endeavour to make himself independent of Germany's leading strings. What incited d'Aehrenthal all the more in this attitude was the fact that Tchirsky, who had been withdrawn from St. Petersburg owing to a dispute at Court with a Grand Duke over a lady belonging to the Austrian Embassy, was German Ambassador in Vienna. It would be difficult to find a more tactless man than Tchirsky or more domineering in his attitude, and d'Aehren-

thal resented it deeply. Matters came to a crisis at a Court Ball in Vienna. Tchirsky had told Lady Cartwright, the British Ambassadress, that after the *cercle* held by the Emperor, he would give her his arm to the ballroom. As he came up to do so, d'Aehrenthal approached and gave his arm, saying that it was his duty to take Lady Cartwright into the ballroom. Tchirsky, spluttering with rage, came up to Cartwright saying, "Non, non, cela ne finira pas ainsi." Later Tchirsky asked d'Aehrenthal for explanations, but the latter replied that having yielded the *pas* to the Nuncio to escort the *doyenne* he had naturally taken the second Ambassadress. The Nuncio told Cartwright that d'Aehrenthal deliberately prepared this plot to annoy Tchirsky and had actually asked him to take in the *doyenne*, saying that he yielded precedence to him for this occasion only, an amiability which greatly astonished the Nuncio. d'Aehrenthal could hardly have hoped to get rid of Tchirsky in the same manner as the latter had been removed from St. Petersburg, but after this humiliation the two men were never on friendly terms again, and it was really a misfortune for Europe that Tchirsky was not sent elsewhere, for his influence in Vienna was baneful, and a large share of responsibility for the outbreak of war was his. It may however be said that d'Aehrenthal, by his annexation policy, bore an equal burden of responsibility.

Tchirsky made no secret of his view that France must be either entirely friendly to Germany, that is to say, subservient to her, or else Germany must be given a free hand to bully and make herself generally disagreeable to France whenever she might find it convenient to do so. Nothing was to be gained from France by mild amiability. He wished to apply the same principles to Austria and that is where he came into collision with d'Aehrenthal.

The German Government made a further attempt this year to intervene in Persia in the hope of breaking up the Anglo-Russian *entente*. Their demand was the settlement of German claims and the introduction of German assistants in the Government of Persia in the same way as it had been proposed, after agreement between England and Russia, to admit French assistants into the Persian Ministry of Finance with a view to setting Persian finances in order. To obviate the German difficulty the proposal was dropped.

The year 1910 was one of sadness and joy. Sadness at the untimely death of King Edward, and joy at my appointment as Viceroy of India.

King Edward went as usual to Biarritz at the beginning of March and

shortly after his arrival it was stated in the Press that His Majesty was suffering from a cold contracted on the journey. A letter dated March 19th received from Sir A. Davidson who was in attendance on the King stated that the King was suffering "from a rather severe bronchial cold". From the accounts I received the King never quite shook it off and was in indifferent health during the whole of his stay at Biarritz. The weather was most unpropitious for his malady as even in April there was, the King stated, snow, rain and constant wind. The King's interest in foreign affairs never ceased. In a long letter from His Majesty on the 5th April 1910, closely written on five sides of square paper, he gave me in detail the plans he had made for the entertainment of ex-President Roosevelt in June, and made the following remarks about the German Emperor in connection with the attempt of the German Government to interfere between Russia and ourselves in Persia. The King wrote, "The way Germany is intriguing against us and Russia is really too bad. They must have 'a finger in every pie' and interfere with us everywhere, at the same time being surprised that we do not like them! It is the old Bismarckian policy which is not yet dead, though I believe the present Chancellor is a most amiable and conciliatory man."

This was the last letter that I received from King Edward. My own letter to the King of April 22nd was the end of a correspondence which had lasted for many years. I concluded my letter by saying, "It is stated in the newspapers that Your Majesty is returning next week. If this news is confirmed by Knollys I shall not have the honour of writing again to Your Majesty for the time being." I little realized then that this was the real end of the chapter. The King returned to London at the end of the month and two days afterwards fell ill and died on the 6th May. The King sent for me after his return, but I did not see him as he was already ill. I shall never forget the anxiety of those days and the feeling of sorrow and loss that I would never see my Master again. When the end came and the news reached me late one evening I found it difficult to realize what a loss the death of the King must be to the nation who loved him, and that his work, great and beneficial as it had been, must by the force of circumstances remain incomplete. To me he was always the kindest of masters and a real friend. I am sure that he trusted me, as well he might, for I was devoted to him. It was well for me that during those five years that I was at the Foreign Office I had such a Chief as Sir Edward Grey, who was never in any way jealous of the close relations existing between King Edward and myself, but I always took the greatest care to tell him of everything that

passed between the King and me, unless it was a matter outside the interests of the Foreign Office which the King had told me in confidence. Whenever the King was abroad he expected me to write to him twice a week, and in spite of his heavy correspondence he rarely failed to reply to every letter. When at home he sent for me generally once a week, very frequently to breakfast with him *tête-à-tête* at Buckingham Palace. He discussed foreign politics most of the time at these interviews with great breadth and interest, and although not a man for detail, he showed remarkable insight and judgment in his views. He showed annoyance sometimes when his own views were not acceptable to the Foreign Office, but he listened to argument and reason. We sometimes differed on political questions, but he never bore me ill will in consequence. I went twice to see him after his death, the second time on the invitation of Queen Alexandra. She gave me as a souvenir the electric bell in jade that I had so often seen on King Edward's writing-table, and I regard it as one of my greatest treasures. I was deeply moved at seeing there, lying on a simple bed, the dead man who had been so good to me, and whom I really loved as a man amongst men. I have always missed him since, and have wondered whether the history of the world might not have been different but for his untimely death.

I must now revert to a purely personal matter. I have already recorded how in January 1909 my name was put forward to the King as a possible successor to Lord Minto as Viceroy of India, whose term of office was due to expire in November 1910, and how the King at that time approved of the idea. For a whole year not a word was mentioned on the subject until Lord Kitchener commenced a campaign in his own favour at the beginning of 1910. Lord Morley was Secretary of State for India, and although much pressure was put upon him by Kitchener's friends and by Kitchener himself, both he and Mr. Asquith decided that under no circumstances would they appoint Lord Kitchener as Viceroy. The King supported Kitchener's candidature strongly. It was towards the end of January that he spoke to Asquith of the succession to Lord Minto and Asquith put forward my name and urged it strongly upon His Majesty. But the King refused to listen to the proposal, saying that he wished to keep me at the Foreign Office, and that he thought Kitchener would be the best appointment. No decision was arrived at. Before the King left for Biarritz the same discussion took place and with the same result. Mr. Asquith saw the King on the day after his return from Biarritz, when His Majesty again asked whom he proposed to appoint to India, and Asquith for the third time put forward

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my name in opposition to the King's suggestion of Kitchener. The King, as I was told afterwards, who was already ill, wrung his hands saying that my name was not to be put forward again, that he wanted to keep me at the Foreign Office as I was very useful to him, and that if the Government persisted in not appointing Kitchener, they must find somebody else. Asquith pointed out to the King that I belonged to the Diplomatic Service and had come to the Foreign Office from the Embassy at St. Petersburg and that he knew I would be unwilling to remain indefinitely at the Foreign Office and would want to go to the Embassy at Paris. The King replied that he did not care and would not mind if I went to the Embassy at Paris as he would always be able to get hold of me at short notice if he wanted me. Asquith promised that he would not put my name forward again, and I heard that Sir George Murray of the Treasury was under discussion in the Cabinet as Lord Minto's successor.

During the three months that these discussions took place I heard privately everything that passed, and I always felt absolutely confident that somehow or other the post of Viceroy would be offered to me. My wife often told me that it was quite useless to think of it and even foolish to do so. My invariable reply was that though I could not tell how it would happen I felt absolutely certain that it would, and I never wavered. I little imagined that it would be through the death of the King that the way would be opened.

I attended the funeral with my wife at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and we stood on the grass lawn outside the Chapel basking in the sun and waiting for the funeral cortège. Lord Morley came up to us, and taking me aside asked me if I would like to succeed Lord Minto in India. I told him that of course I would and that it would be the realization of the dream of my life. He asked me if I was a tariff reformer and I was able to reply truthfully that, although owing to my official position I had never taken any part in politics, I was and always had been a free trader. Morley said that was the only point he wished to know, and that I might regard the matter as settled, but that for the time being I was not to tell anybody except my wife. Of course I was overjoyed at the prospect, but knowing as I did the history of the previous three months I remember feeling how much I wished that the offer had been made to me at some other time and place. Still, I consoled myself with the thought that my late King and Master would not under the altered circumstances regret my appointment.

It was not till the 10th June that I received from the Prime Minister a

letter definitely offering me the appointment. It reached me while dining alone with my elder brother in my house in Bryanston Square, and I remember so well his astonishment and joyful excitement. During the three weeks interval between my conversation with Morley and the receipt of this letter I had one of the most amusing times of my life hearing at almost every dinner-table discussions as to who the next Viceroy would be. My name was generally mentioned, but most people considered Kitchener's appointment to be almost a certainty. He, I think, had some misgivings as the following incident would show : Sir Walter Lawrence, formerly Lord Curzon's Private Secretary in India, came to see me at the Foreign Office and told me that he had met Kitchener in Belgrave Square, who stopped him, and that it was the first time that he and Kitchener had spoken to each other since the breach between Curzon and Kitchener. The latter asked Lawrence if he knew me, and on his replying in the affirmative asked him to tell me that it was impossible for anybody to fill properly the post of Viceroy unless he had private means of at least £8,000 a year. Lawrence replied that he would certainly repeat to me what he had said, but he would add that it was quite untrue and that he as former Private Secretary to a Viceroy was in the best position to know. I thanked him warmly for telling me. My appointment was published on the 11th June and it was a bitter blow to Kitchener. He disappeared entirely for about ten days to hide his disappointment. It must have been very great, for he had counted on it so surely that he had actually appointed his personal staff, whose names I knew.

I will now return from this digression to my main story.

Almost immediately after the King's funeral a meeting which I attended of all the Members of the Privy Council was held at St. James's Palace in the presence of King George, when the announcement of his accession to the Throne was read and each Privy Councillor in turn on bended knee swore allegiance to the Sovereign. This is considered to be the real act of accession by the Sovereign and the definite acceptance of him as King. As I rose from the stool upon which I was kneeling to take the oath, the King whispered to me that he wished to see me at Marlborough House immediately after the conclusion of the ceremony. To me it was a fact of some interest that I was the first person officially received by the King after his formal accession to the Throne.

The King knew what had passed between Morley and myself about India and was very nice about it. He told me quite frankly that he, like

his father the late King, had been a warm supporter of Kitchener's candidature, but since the Government had decided upon me he was delighted that I should be the future Viceroy, and assured me that as such I would always enjoy his confidence and warm support. He discussed with me at the same time other Foreign Office matters.

Amongst the many Sovereigns and Princes who attended King Edward's funeral were the Kaiser and the King of Bulgaria. After his visit to England the Kaiser told Prince Furstenberg that in his opinion the death of King Edward would be advantageous to Germany since Germany could not help finding King Edward on all occasions an antagonist of German foreign policy. He thought it would be some time before King George would assert his personality in international questions, and during that period, the important one for the development of the German Fleet, there would be a period of calm for the foreign policy of Germany.

The Sovereign who perhaps felt the death of King Edward more than any other was the venerable Emperor of Austria. He had been looking forward to seeing the King again at Ischl that summer, and the news of the King's death came as a great shock to him. His friendship for the late King was very true and of long standing. It was sad that friction between the two Governments over the Bosnian annexation had prevented the usual personal exchange of courtesy between the two Sovereigns in 1909.

The King of Bulgaria had long desired to pay an official visit to King Edward in London, which the King had always skilfully opposed. Finally, King Ferdinand asked if his presence at the funeral of King Edward would be welcome, and on his receiving a satisfactory reply as to his precedence, came to London and stayed there for some days. Although I had not seen him for years, we met in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and I then realized how much he had changed. He expressed himself later to Sir M. Findlay, our Minister at Sofia, that he was "more than satisfied with his reception".

On my appointment to India Sir A. Nicolson, who had succeeded me as Ambassador at St. Petersburg, was appointed my successor in the Foreign Office. There could not have been a better appointment. Nevertheless, objections were raised at Berlin and Vienna. The German and Austrian Press made violent attacks against him as having been hostile to German and Austrian aims both at Algeciras and in St. Petersburg. Count Metternich complained of it to Sir E. Goschen in Berlin, but that did not surprise me as he had made a similar complaint on my appointment to the Foreign Office

five years previously. The Austrians considered that Sir A. Nicolson had been more anti-Austrian during the Bosnian crisis than Isvolsky himself and d'Aehrenthal said that he feared that Sir A. Nicolson was a rabid pro-Russian. These foreign statesmen could not recognize that Nicolson was a diplomatist of broad and far-seeing views, and that his only fault from their point of view was that he was pro-British, and not pro-Russian or pro-anything else. The Germans tried to spread the story that the Kaiser had refused to receive Nicolson as successor to Sir F. Lascelles, on the ground of his hostile attitude towards Germany at the Conference of Algeciras, but there was not one word of truth in this as there had never been any question of sending Nicolson to Berlin.

Sir Edward Grey asked me to remain at the Foreign Office till the end of the session, and although I did not leave for India till the beginning of November I retained my post till then, but after the close of the session my attendance at the Foreign Office was very irregular. During those months the situation was very peaceful and little going on. I had naturally many preoccupations and preparations to make in view of my impending departure. Still, I was very pleased to conclude and sign three or four days before leaving for India the report of a very strong sub-committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence, of which I was appointed Chairman by the Prime Minister, to deal with the treatment of neutral and enemy merchant shipping at the outbreak and in time of war. This report contained all the details of the action to be taken in British ports in dealing with enemy shipping at the outbreak of war, and all the necessary precautions to be taken by the military, naval, customs and police authorities. It was accepted without modification by the plenary Committee of Imperial Defence and became the textbook of the action to be taken under the circumstances as foreseen. Its provisions were most successfully carried out on the outbreak of war on August 4th, 1914, and I had the pleasure of executing them myself in India. Although the work of this sub-committee was very onerous, its results were most successful.

It was in July that I was raised to the Peerage. I had wished to go to India as Sir Charles Hardinge, just as my grandfather had gone there as Sir Henry Hardinge and had been raised to the Peerage for his services, but this was vetoed by the King, and as I wished to preserve my surname as a connecting link in India with my grandfather I assumed, with my elder brother's consent, the title I now bear.

Naturally I had countless congratulations from all my friends on my

appointment, but the one that I think I liked best came from Sir Edward Grey. It was :

"I am delighted that you are now launched so successfully before the public eye. This sounds as if you were a new Dreadnought, and if public men were ships, that is what you would now be."

It was on November 2nd, 1910, that I left for India, and all my friends and the whole of the Corps Diplomatique with one exception came to see me off at Victoria Station. That exception was Count Metternich, the German Ambassador, a significant but to me very flattering omission. It showed that he knew that I knew the aims and intentions of Germany. This did not prevent him two years later asking me to provide him with every sort of facility for travelling about India and visiting native princes with a view to ascertaining their attitude and loyalty towards the British Government during the winter preceding the war.

I left England full of enthusiasm for my great undertaking and more than happy at the realization of my highest ambition. I appreciated fully the immense difficulties before me and the heavy responsibilities of the office I was to hold. I remember thinking that my grandfather must have experienced precisely the same feelings as my own when embarking for India more than sixty years earlier, and that he had won through. I felt that I must do no less and must spare no effort to succeed. Still, I knew my own limitations, and was very diffident, though not afraid. Could I have foreseen all that was to happen to me during the following five and a half years in India and all the sadness that was to come into my life during that period I wonder sometimes to myself whether I could have had the courage to go. In any case, my feelings would have been very different from what they were on that November morning.

Of my official friends the person whom I regretted leaving most was undoubtedly Sir Edward Grey. We had worked together for five years on the happiest terms and without a single note of discord. We may have differed occasionally in our views on certain points, but I was always given a full opportunity to explain mine, while naturally I carried out loyally the decision of the Secretary of State, whether I agreed with it or not. Our co-operation in the interests of the Foreign Office was so united, and Sir Edward Grey's character was so frank and upright, that he never felt any jealousy of my close political friendship with King Edward, a rock upon which my relations with almost any other Secretary of State might have foundered. Before I left he wrote : "I am grieved that our

SIR EDWARD GREY

time together is over. I can't tell you what a comfort it has been to me in these years to have someone, who could be a friend, to work with. Some day we may become colleagues in work again. No one can say what may be happening in public life five years hence, but in any case the friendship will always remain." Still, I knew that it could never be the same again.

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CHAPTER XV

L O N D O N , 1 9 1 6 — 1 9 1 7

FIVE and a half years passed in India full of incident good and bad, happy and sad, and it was on the 23rd April 1916 that I landed at Dover with my surviving boy Alec and my daughter Diamond. What a change from when I left for India ! I was met at Dover by the Mayor and Corporation, who came to greet me, and at Victoria by Lord Farquhar on behalf of the King, and a deputation of friends from the Foreign Office whom I was delighted to meet again. Many other friends and relations were there also, and it was very pleasant to feel myself at home again and as a simple citizen. A comfortable house had been secured for me in Gloucester Place, and I looked forward to settling down peacefully to looking after my son and daughter and to straightening out my private affairs. But these hopes were not to be realized.

When I saw Sir Edward Grey after my return he told me that Sir A. Nicolson was very tired after more than five years at the Foreign Office, that his health had suffered and that he was anxious to resign and to retire into private life. He asked me to return to my former position at the Foreign Office and to work under him. I readily consented to do so, regarding it as war work, and realizing that it would be impossible to live in England without war work of some description. A few days afterwards (May 3rd) the Prime Minister wrote and asked me to preside as Chairman over a Committee that he was setting up to advise upon the commercial policy to be followed after the war. This proposal placed me in a great quandary. I realized that the work to be undertaken by the Committee would last at least a year and possibly more, and that it would be impossible for me to act as Chairman and to carry on the work I was to undertake at the Foreign Office. If I had to choose between the two, my inclination took me to the Foreign Office, where I felt I could do more useful work than as Chairman of a Committee, however important its work might be. I consulted Sir Edward Grey, and we decided finally that

I should decline the honour. I did so, explaining to Mr. Asquith my reasons. This was followed by a letter from him dated the 6th May in which he said he quite understood my reasons, but put forward a further request which would not interfere with my going to the Foreign Office since it would take but a very short time. It was that I should accept the Chairmanship of a Royal Commission to inquire into the causes of the recent outbreak in Ireland and the conduct and degree of responsibility of the Irish Executive, civil and military, in connection therewith. After consultation with Sir Edward Grey I accepted the task, which I felt would be both interesting and instructive, and would not be of long duration.

The Royal Commission, consisting of Mr. Justice Shearman, Sir Mackenzie Chalmers and myself as Chairman, commenced its sittings in public in London on the 8th May, and examined Sir Matthew Nathan, Secretary to the Government of Ireland, Mr. Birrell, Secretary for Ireland, Lord Wimborne, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, Lord Middleton and Sir David Harrel, an official who had held various appointments in Ireland. Having concluded our inquiry in London on the 22nd May we crossed to Dublin. The German submarines were at that time very active in the Irish Channel and we had to be escorted over. The Royal Commission was lodged in the Shelbourne Hotel, which bore many signs of the outbreak in broken windows and bullet marks on the walls both inside and out. The Commission commenced its sittings on the 25th May and sat continuously for four days in Dublin, returning to London on the 30th May. During those days we saw and examined an immense number of Irish officials, both civil and military, and received visits from a few influential Irishmen who gave us much useful information. The Commission held one more sitting in London and then adjourned to draw up their report. In our report, which we signed on the 26th June, we reviewed the whole political situation from the very inception of the Sinn Fein Movement in 1906, and showed clearly how through the weakness of the Government, the same as that actually in power in 1916, the Sinn Fein Movement had been allowed to exist and actually to form a military organization with an uncontrolled traffic in arms, and at the same time to carry on a secret and treasonable intrigue with Germany which had failed more by accident than by prevention. Blame and praise were attached freely, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, Mr. Birrell, received the severest criticism. He resigned shortly afterwards. It was an absolutely frank, judicial and un-

biased report, not at all what the Government had expected and for that reason had a good reception from all except the Governmental and Irish organs of the Press. I need hardly say that the Government were not at all pleased with the report, and I may mention that this Royal Commission was the only one never to receive the thanks of the Government. It was a unique and flattering exception. In view of the later developments in Ireland I always read our report with the utmost satisfaction.

It was on my birthday, the 20th June, that I took up my post once more as Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office. I was very glad to serve once more under my former chief, Sir Edward Grey, but somehow or other after nearly six years' complete separation, during which each of us had passed through difficult and critical times, thousands of miles apart, it was hardly to be expected that in the throes and anxieties of the war it would be possible to find quite the same *camaraderie* and opportunities for friendly contact as existed in times of peace. Though there was always the most perfect accord and agreement between us and a sincere friendship that nothing could ruffle, still our relations were not quite the same. We both had grown older during those six years and both had suffered. My welcome from my former friends and fellow workers in the Foreign Office was a very warm one and I felt quite at home with them again. I received also many letters from Heads of Missions in foreign countries expressing their pleasure and satisfaction at my return to my former post. One of the most flattering was from Sir C. Spring Rice, our Ambassador in Washington, who wrote :

"I hope I need not say how glad and proud I am to serve under you again. It is quite unnecessary for me to tell you what other people could say better, and what you yourself must know in your own heart, that you have qualities which make you a safe and trusty leader of men, who will serve under you gladly and even the better because you are their Chief. I was in the Foreign Office at the outbreak of the war, and I saw a minute of yours on the Military Attaché's report on German relations with Switzerland in connection with the Basle railways and the projected attack through Switzerland on Besançon. In your minute you said that putting all together, Belgian railways, Kiel Canal, Army Votes, etc., the conflict seemed certain towards the end of 1915.¹ If we had only prepared for that ! I heard also of what you did about Indian ammunition and M's interference."

I found the Foreign Office a very different place from what it was

¹ I had said 1913, not 1915.

DEATH OF KITCHENER

before I went to India. Instead of the former 150 employees the number had increased to 500, and about 300 telegrams were received daily. The work was tremendous and never-ending by day or night, but of intense and absorbing interest.

There was also attached to the Foreign Office a Contraband Department under the control of Lord Robert Cecil, whose position was almost that of an independent Secretary of State. This was a great advantage to me as it absolved me from all responsibility for contraband questions, which were very difficult and technical, though of the highest importance. It cannot be denied that the work of the Contraband Department influenced the result of the war to a very important extent.

It was during the first days of June that the nation suffered a severe loss in the death of Kitchener who went down in the *Hampshire*, which struck a mine on her way to a northern port of Russia, whence Kitchener was to go to St. Petersburg to co-ordinate action with the Russian Army against Germany and Austria. Unfortunately O'Beirne, a very capable and nice diplomatist, who had been sent to accompany and help Kitchener, was lost at the same time. He was a friend of mine, of whom I had a very high opinion. The death of Kitchener was a serious moral loss, for he was an outstanding personality of great value in spite of certain defects. I had met him and seen him several times in the Cabinet since my return from India, and I was much struck by the fact that he had aged prematurely, grown stout, and lost much of his alertness. I cannot help feeling that death came to him at the right moment, when he was at the zenith of his power and reputation. I do not think that there can be any controversy as to the great and exceptional services rendered by Kitchener to this country during a long period of service, but I have always been struck by two instances of courage and foresight on his part which, in my humble opinion, were strokes of genius. The first was when he declared in the House of Lords that he required an army of a million men, and the second was his statement that there would be three years of war. He took England by surprise and nobody would have believed it if anybody else had said it, but he was right, except in so far as he under-estimated the number of men that would be needed and the duration of the war. Critics have said that he made a mistake in creating the Kitchener Army instead of utilizing the Territorial Army created by Lord Haldane which was already in existence, but I do not wish to enter into that controversy, beyond remarking that whatever people may say of Lord Haldane in the past

on the score of pro-German sentiments, which he never professed, it is indisputable that he was one of the greatest War Ministers that England has ever had, since it was he who created the Expeditionary Force of six divisions and the Territorial Army. What we could have done in the War without these two creations it is difficult to imagine.

In June 1916 the war appeared to be approaching a very critical phase. The Battle of Jutland had taken place and had ended with an indecisive result, the losses of ships on both sides being very heavy. I will not touch here upon the controversy which arose immediately as to whether Admiral Jellicoe was right or wrong in not following up the battle, but as an onlooker at home I can testify to the fact that, had the battleship squadron suffered any serious losses, there would undoubtedly have been a serious attack of nerves in England as to the possibility of a German invasion. The battle had, however, the advantageous result that the German Fleet realized after its losses that it was no longer strong enough to try further conclusions in the open sea, nor was it in a position to harass the flank of the Russian Armies operating in Poland and Eastern Prussia. The Russians were maintaining their position in the Bukovina, while General Brusiloff was pursuing the Austrians in Galicia and capturing large stores of Austrian arms and ammunition. The Italians, relieved by the Russian diversion in the Bukovina and the removal of Austrian divisions from the Trentino to Galicia, were making good progress against the Austrians. At the same time the British Armies in France were just commencing an offensive on the whole of the line in the hope of relieving German pressure upon Verdun. The French were to commence an attack north of our line, but although success was hoped for it was impossible to say whether our troops would succeed in breaking through the German lines. Very heavy losses were anticipated. We then had an enormous number of men in our front, more than we had ever had before, and a reserve of munitions which could only be counted in millions.

This advance, carried out in the month of July, proved a great success. The Germans were under the impression that the French Armies had been so hopelessly weakened that they would be no longer capable of a violent offensive, with the result that the bulk of the German troops and all their best armies were concentrated in front of the British lines. The German line in front of the French troops was in consequence thinly held and Marshal Joffre, who had kept in reserve some of his very best French divisions, was able to secure a considerable success. In spite of the strength

ROUMANIA ENTERS THE WAR

of the German lines our forces succeeded in advancing a considerable distance, but our losses were very heavy compared to those of the French. We had about 80,000 casualties, while the French lost only about 6,000 men.

At that time Roumania had not come into the war, that old fox Bratiano having decided that his country should not declare war until a stage had been reached at which there could be no possible doubt as to which way the war would end, so that no possible risk should be run. At the same time he made the most preposterous demands of territorial extension which were duly promised by the Allies in their anxiety to secure the co-operation of Roumania in the war. On the other hand, while he was asking the Allies to supply funds for military preparations and the purchase of Roumanian crops, our attitude towards Roumania was quite firm. We would supply money and buy crops only after they had declared war, and we announced that if they entered into the war too late the promises made to them of certain territory would be null and void. Bratiano was however seriously considering the entry of Roumania into the war, but had the idea of following the example of Italy and of not declaring war against Germany if it could be avoided.

The importance to the Allies of Roumania coming into the war was that Austria and Turkey were both receiving supplies from Roumania and that only by her entry into the war could Roumania be compelled to close her frontiers. Further, it was only through Roumania that the Russians would be able successfully to invade Bulgaria and thus break the connection between East and West. It was also hoped that the Bulgarians would not fight against the Russians and that a Russian invasion would mean the end of King Ferdinand and his gang. Finally, at the beginning of September 1916, Roumania declared war against Austria, and Germany promptly did the same against Roumania, and these declarations were immediately followed by a severe defeat by the Bulgarians and the capture of a bridgehead on the Danube at Turtukaia, with the loss of 20,000 men.

The entry of Roumania into the war was not for us an unmixed blessing. Her troops were admirable, but her army officers contemptible, while strategy was conspicuous by its absence. All military considerations were at the outbreak of war subordinated to political aims, and instead of concentrating at one point where a real blow might be struck, such as might have been possible against Bulgaria, they spread out their forces

in a fan shape all over Transylvania, with the result that they were easily thrown back by smaller forces of Austro-Germans. They then squealed for assistance. We did what was possible to create a diversion from the side of Salonica and the Russians promised to send two Army corps to their assistance. As soon as Roumania came into the war it was anticipated that the Germans, who were already anxious to score a success somewhere in order to rehabilitate public opinion in Germany, would do their utmost to overwhelm and crush Roumania, which was the weakest spot in the armour of the Allies and thus to secure for themselves the enormous stocks of grain and oil stored in that country. General Mackensen with some of the best German divisions drove back the Roumanians, invaded Roumania and occupied Bucharest, but in the meantime we had sent a special mission to Roumania under Colonel Norton-Griffiths, M.P., to destroy both the oil wells and the supplies of grain. Whether the mission succeeded may be judged by the fact that within six months all the wells that had been destroyed were in working order and large supplies of oil and grain despatched to Germany and Austria. But the head of the special mission received a K.C.B. for his efforts !

After rejoining the Foreign Office I was appointed a member of the War Committee and attended, in company with Sir E. Grey, all those meetings where any question involving foreign policy was likely to arise. This was extremely interesting to me as it gave me an insight into the working of Mr. Asquith's Cabinet. It was towards the end of July or the beginning of August when, at a Cabinet meeting at which I was present, Lloyd George made an onslaught on Asquith and criticized in most vigorous terms the manner in which the war was being carried on and the general lack of comprehensive cohesion in the campaigns being conducted against the enemy in Europe, Asia and America. He made an entirely unexpected speech lasting more than an hour, and after its conclusion Asquith, with only a few words, adjourned the meeting. As I returned with Grey to the Foreign Office he remarked to me that that was the first step taken by Lloyd George to oust Asquith from the Premiership and that he would certainly succeed in a few weeks' time. This forecast proved correct.

Events in Greece had for some time been going very badly, the King and Court being strongly pro-German. It was really hardly a matter for surprise since the Queen of Greece was the Kaiser's own sister. There had been many disgraceful actions on the part of the Greeks, such as the surrender of Fort Roupel to the Bulgarians with a number of heavy guns.

They had also given large consignments of arms and munitions to the enemy. In order to correct the attitude of suspicion prevalent amongst the Allies, Prince Andrew of Greece was sent on a tour to the Allied Courts in order to try to convince the Allied Governments of the pro-Ally attitude of Greece. On his arrival in England he came to see me on the last day of August 1916 and told me that he had been sent by King Constantine to lodge complaints against the actions of the Powers. He read me a long telegram from the King containing the rumour that a proclamation was about to be issued by the Allied Ministers in Athens, for which there was no foundation whatever. On the other hand, I was very frank with him and told him that the bag of the German Military Attaché at Athens had been intercepted and was found to contain incriminating documents showing that information was passing to Berlin of his own doings in Paris and London. In proof of this I read to him an extract from a letter addressed to the Greek Minister in Berlin containing a report of Prince Andrew's conversations with King George, and asked him whether he thought it right that such conversations should be reported by his Government to the capital of the enemy. I told him that it was notorious that the Germans and Bulgarians received news through Athens of the military movements of the Allies on the Salonica front, and I showed him a telegram received that very morning at the War Office stating that a wireless message from the German Military Attaché at Sofia to the German Military Attaché at Athens had been intercepted, informing the latter that the Bulgarians had received orders to attack all along the line. I asked him whether, as a soldier, he considered that Greece, a neutral country, was justified in allowing a country at war to use the Greek wireless station for receiving and transmitting information relating to operations of war. I remarked also that it was strange that the German Military Attaché was received by the King far more frequently than any other, and I mentioned that I knew for a fact that he had had interviews with the King on the 12th, 13th and 15th July, one interview, at which both the King and Crown Prince were present, lasting nearly two hours. Such behaviour seemed unfitting for a Sovereign who proclaimed himself to be in sympathy with the Allies. Prince Andrew retired a wiser but a sadder man.

There really was no end to the acts of treachery of the Greek Royal Family and Government at this time, for on another occasion a letter from the Queen of Greece to the German Emperor was intercepted containing seven plans of the defences of the Suez Canal, and this was followed

shortly afterwards by the surrender of the Greek force at Cavalla with all its arms and ammunition.

It was about this time that Portugal was clamouring to be allowed to send troops to France, a proposal that we did not welcome at all. At first we were disposed to agree on condition that the troops had British officers, but the Portuguese would not listen to such a proposal. It was remembered that in the Peninsular War, Portuguese troops had fought well under British officers, and it was hoped that the Portuguese Government might agree to this, but on their refusal it was decided to accept two divisions, which had to be entirely equipped and trained by British officers.

It was in September that London was thrilled by the destruction of the first of the German Zeppelins that had from time to time invaded England. It fell in flames near Enfield and its destruction was witnessed by thousands of people even in London. Everybody seemed to know that the raid was to take place, and the streets and roofs were crowded with people on the watch who saw it all. It was the first time that incendiary bullets were used to set the envelopes on fire. This was followed a fortnight later by the destruction of two more Zeppelins.

At the end of September while everything was going well on the Western Front the situation elsewhere was steadily deteriorating. The Russian offensive had spent itself at Lemberg without result, while the Roumanians and Russians had been checked in the Dobrudja by General Mackensen and a large German force which in the end captured and occupied Bucharest and the greater part of Roumania. It was just at this time that our tanks, which had been concealed and practised in the park at Hatfield, made their first appearance and proved a great success. They were a complete surprise to the Germans and various incidents connected with them were apparently very amusing, since some of them wandered off on their own through villages crammed with German troops, were received with volleys from the soldiers without the slightest damage being done to them, and at the same time inflicted serious losses on the enemy. They were so constructed as to be able to get astride a German trench and thence to sweep the trench on either side. It was a splendidly kept secret and the use of them proved very effective. From the 1st July to the end of September our casualties on the Somme were 250,000, of whom about one-fifth were killed.

It was about this time that Germany and Austria began to realize that they could not win the war, and that it was necessary either to create new combinations or to propose mediation. Consequently rumours of a separate

peace between Germany and Russia were assiduously spread from German sources, while the Austrian Government made an effort to detach Spain from her neutrality and to make her come into the war by the definite promise of Gibraltar and Algeria in the event of defeat of the Allies. There were also rumours of mediation by President Wilson, but the shooting of Captain Fryatt by the Germans and the deportation of the young French population from Lille fairly exasperated public opinion in England, which became so firmly crystallized that we were farther than ever from mediation. It was at this juncture that Lloyd George, without the cognizance of Sir E. Grey, made a speech which reflected truthfully public opinion in which he denounced such attempts and insisted upon their futility. Nevertheless, efforts for mediation continued to be made from different quarters inspired by Germany.

It was in October that the Pope told Reuter's Agent that Germany was most anxious to make peace, and if it were possible would restore Belgium, evacuate France and probably give up Alsace and Lorraine in return for compensations such as Madagascar, etc. Her ambition was to secure a Colonial Empire. The Pope said, however, that he would not mediate until it was made clear to him that he was wanted by both sides to do so. This was not likely to be the case.

In October and November German emissaries were going the round of the various countries of the Allies suggesting terms of peace as obtainable which would be most acceptable to each individual Ally. We were told that Belgium would be restored and promises were made of financial assistance for her reconstruction, etc. On the other hand, we learnt from other sources that elsewhere, when mentioning the restoration of Belgian territory, a further condition was added that Belgium should remain closely allied in economic and even military interests with the Central Powers as being the safest protection for the future of Belgium. Thus it was hoped by the Germans that the lamb would lie down with the wolf.

It was about this time that my boy Alec joined a battalion of the Grenadiers in France. He had been in the Indian Reserve of Officers from 1914 and had joined the Grenadiers in May 1916. His absence at the front was a perpetual source of anxiety to me, especially after the loss of his elder brother.

News reached us in November 1916 of German intentions to start an intensive campaign in the following February when they would be able to send out and maintain at sea forty submarines simultaneously. The news

was serious since the submarine menace was at that time an ever-growing danger, the toll of lost ships being unable to keep pace with the ships under construction, while our Navy found it impossible to destroy submarines as fast as the Germans could build them. In the meantime the shortage of food supplies was beginning to be felt. The area of cultivation in England had shrunk owing to the conscription of the young agriculturists. There was a great deal of suffering owing to the enhanced prices of bread, meat and milk. Large fortunes were being made at the same time out of the war by people belonging to neither the upper nor the lower classes.

On November 28th a German seaplane passed over London and dropped half a dozen bombs near Harrods' stores without doing much harm. I heard the explosions from the Foreign Office and thought they were practising with rifles at Wellington Barracks. This was the beginning of the German raids of aeroplanes on London.

At this time great pressure was being put upon the Greeks to declare war, but King Constantine was opposed to this course, chiefly because Venezelos was in favour of it. At the same time the situation was full of danger to the Allies, who issued an ultimatum to King Constantine to surrender the Greek guns and to withdraw the Greek troops from Thessaly. Simultaneously the enemy Legations were expelled from Athens under the orders of the French Admiral, and if they had sought the protection of the U.S. Legation the Allies would have found themselves in a very unenviable position. This was a possible and not improbable step to have taken and I was surprised at the time that it was not adopted by the German Legation. The ultimatum to King Constantine resulted in an attack upon British and French troops who had been landed at the Piraeus, with the loss of several men, and finally with the bombardment of the King's Palace by the Allied warships in the Gulf of Phalerum. Altogether the proceedings of the Allies in Greece were of an equivocal and inglorious character and were due almost entirely to French initiative. I was never able to understand why the Allies were so anxious to bring Greece into the war, since her troops were at that time notoriously inefficient and would have been a source of real danger to any other troops with whom they might have to co-operate.

At the beginning of December there was a change of personnel in the Government, Lloyd George becoming Prime Minister and Mr. Balfour Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Asquith and Sir E. Grey having both of them retired, together with Lord Crewe and others, Sir E. Grey's prophecy of Lloyd George's efforts to oust Asquith having thus come true.

I must say that I think a change of Prime Minister was very necessary, but the advent of Lloyd George to supreme power was not an unmixed blessing, though one could not help appreciating his energy and quickness. These advantages were, however, seriously counterbalanced by his exceptional ignorance of foreign countries and foreign affairs, and by his own confidence that he knew more than anybody else. As a private individual he had wonderful charm. I was very sorry indeed to part from Sir E. Grey, with whom it had always been a great joy and pleasure to work, and we had spent more than five years together at the Foreign Office. I was naturally pleased to work with Mr. Balfour, whom I had known well for many years and had always admired for his knowledge and statesmanship. Still, my relations with him could never have been the same as those of my friendship with Grey.

Lloyd George started like a new broom. He created a new War Cabinet to consist of only four or five members of the Cabinet and to sit every day, but at its first meeting there were no less than twelve present. General Robertson, Admiral Jellicoe and I received orders to be present at all meetings of this new Committee as experts. We all and each of us felt that it would be impossible to do so and to carry on the work of our Departments, but this as well as the new War Committee soon fell into desuetude and Cabinet meetings were carried on in much the same way as before, the only difference being that Lloyd George had greater powers of direction than Asquith. It was interesting to note that all attempts to solve the two most difficult and almost insoluble questions, viz. those of finance and submarines, were invariably shelved whenever raised. As regards finance, the primary difficulty was to supply the Allies with the necessary credits in America and elsewhere in order that they should be able to obtain the arms and munitions that they required. These could be obtained more easily than elsewhere in the United States, where the arms and munition makers were doing a roaring trade, but the United States refused credits to other combatants except Great Britain, with the result that the Treasury had to shoulder the burden of financing the war, for which we have suffered ever since.

As regards the question of submarines, the chief naval authorities at that time declared that there was no antidote except to arm all merchant vessels. This measure was carried out as rapidly as possible, but was only partially successful and the submarine danger remained a very serious one when troops were moved by sea. I heard the question of convoy raised in the Cabinet over and over again with Admiral Jellicoe when in command of the

Grand Fleet and also as First Sea Lord, and he and Admiral Oliver, the Chief of the Naval Staff, repeatedly declared that convoys were impossible and out of the question, and yet a few months later the convoy system was adopted by Admiral Beatty and proved an immense success.

Not only the military but the political situation in Russia had for some time been considered serious, and it had been the intention of Sir E. Grey to proceed to St. Petersburg to attend a Conference to be held there of the Allies when Asquith's Government fell and Grey resigned the Foreign Office. Mr. Balfour, Grey's successor, was urged by the Government to go in his place to Russia, but he wisely declined on the plea of health. It was then suggested that I should go to St. Petersburg with Austen Chamberlain as joint Representatives, but I declined to go to Russia in the middle of winter after I had spent six years in India. It would have been suicidal to do so. Eventually Lord Milner went to Russia, but his mission was futile since he failed to see the impending revolution, which broke out almost immediately after his return to this country.

It was at the beginning of December 1916 that the first German peace overture was made to Russia, the motive being to make the Germans set their teeth on the refusal of Russia and the Allies to listen to it, and secondly to put the Allies in the wrong *vis-à-vis* of the neutral world and particularly of America. We never knew what the terms of peace were, the Germans having refused to give them until we declared ourselves ready to discuss them. In the meantime the German offer was scornfully rejected by the Duma, the same feeling against peace at this juncture being very strong amongst the Allies. Baron Sonnino, Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, remarked that "the swaggering tone of the German dove was not very encouraging." The German proposal was a clear indication of consciousness of failing strength. If the German Government had been sure of ultimate victory they would have waited until the Allies cried for mercy.

A few days later (December 20th) an American peace note emanating from President Wilson was handed in to the Allies. His suggestion was that each Ally should enunciate its own special demands, and in making a definite offer of mediation to the French Government the President maintained that there was no connection between his offer of mediation and the recent German proposal to Russia. The President might well have waited before sending his peace note until he had learnt the reply of the Allies to Bethmann-Hollweg's peace overture, but it was issued four days after the German note had been communicated to the Allies by the American Embassies

MURDER OF RASPUTIN

accredited to them, with the evident intention that there should not be sufficient time to answer the German note before the presentation of his own. Did the President realize that to support peace at that moment was to support militarism with all the horrors it had entailed? It was frankly a piece of impertinence after the Ministerial declarations in the Parliaments of Russia, Italy, England and France rejecting the German overture. The President missed his opportunity. His phrase of "being too proud to fight" became as notorious as Bethmann-Hollweg's "scrap of paper".

There was a certain amount of criticism in England at this time of Sir C. Spring Rice's attitude in Washington. His policy was to keep aloof from all propaganda and suspicion of intrigue, and the dignity of his attitude was in marked contrast to that of Count Bernstorff, the German Ambassador. Stupid people said that Spring Rice ought to have been more in the lime-light expounding the views and policy of the Allies, but the cause of the Allies was so clear and just that no explanation of their attitude and actions was needed. The pro-Germans in the States were most anxious to secure his withdrawal as they fully realized his superior intellect and infallible perspicacity. Spring Rice's attitude was throughout worthy of his great position and he rendered incalculable services to our country.

It was in December 1916 that an incident of general interest, from the lurid light thrown by it upon the Emperor and Empress, occurred in St. Petersburg, viz. the murder of Rasputin. The story takes one back a couple of centuries to the times when such occurrences were frequent in Russia. The Grand Duke Dimitri and Felix Elston (Prince Yousoupoff) were the prime movers in the plot for his assassination and actually invited the priest into the Yousoupoff Palace where he was killed. His body, with the legs tied together and one bullet in the head and another in the chest, was transported and thrown into the Neva near the Petrovsky Bridge. The excuse was that the victim, owing to his influence upon the Empress, was the curse of their country and must be got rid of, and it must be admitted that for this view there was some justification. Unfortunately the Empress was always in the hands of some mystic or religious adventurer; previously it had been a French charlatan named Philippe, and as I have already stated, two years before the birth of the Cesarevitch, Rasputin had assured her that she would have a son which she anxiously hoped for. It was at the christening of the Cesarevitch that I saw Rasputin, but it was only when I was leaving St. Petersburg that I first heard of him as a clever and very coarse and profligate priest.

The murder created such a sensation and acquired such publicity that inferences were drawn upon the relations of the Empress with Rasputin which had no justification in fact, but which nevertheless caused serious prejudice to the prestige and reputation of the Imperial Family. The incident may really be regarded as the beginning of the end since it undermined amongst the loyal classes the position of the Emperor, which had been already shaken by the plots of the revolutionaries. Rasputin was buried at Tsarskoe Selo, the summer residence of the Emperor, as if he had been a saintly martyr. The Empress went alone to pray by his coffin and the Emperor and Empress were present at the funeral which took place at night.

This young Prince Yousoupoff has since taken up his abode in England and has published in book form under the title of *Rasputin* a full account of the plot to remove Rasputin, and his actual murder. Although those engaged in the plot may have considered that they were performing a patriotic duty in ridding their country of what they regarded as a public danger, it is a different matter writing a book about it for public sale.

Shortly after this episode Sir George Buchanan had a prolonged interview with the Emperor, and foreseeing the dangers ahead, urged H.M. to take steps to conciliate the progressives and to restore the confidence of the people by breaking away from the reactionaries. How little the Emperor grasped the situation may be gauged from his inquiry, "Do you mean that the people are to regain my confidence or that I am to regain theirs?" However, there was little hope of concession since in all these matters it was the Empress who had the last word.

The Milner mission arrived in St. Petersburg in January 1917, but it achieved nothing. Balfour shared my opinion that it would have been better to have sent a figure-head like the Duke of Connaught or Prince Louis of Battenberg, with Milner or any other Government official to do the business side of the mission, but Lord Milner absolutely declined to go if anybody was sent above him. To anybody knowing Russia it was obvious that a Cabinet Minister would enjoy no prestige at St. Petersburg while a Royal personage, owing to relationship with the Emperor, would enjoy not only prestige but access to the inner circles of the Imperial Family. I was present at the meeting of the Cabinet after Lord Milner's return and listened to his report. Mr. Balfour, on learning the contents of the report, remarked to me later that Milner had told us nothing that we had not

already heard from Sir G. Buchanan. Milner did not foresee the revolution which took place a month later.

About this time Count Benckendorff, Russian Ambassador in London, died when on leave in St. Petersburg. He was a great loss to this country as his loyalty and friendship were beyond question and he had a large circle of friends. We at the Foreign Office who came almost into daily touch with him felt his loss deeply. Sazonoff was appointed his successor, but owing to the Revolution, never took up his post.

Another death that took place about this time (November 1916) was that of the aged and venerable Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria. His whole life had been dogged by misfortune and tragedy and he left this world in the midst of the greatest tragedy of all, which had been brought about by Austria's ultimatum to Servia. The young Emperor, his nephew, who succeeded him, was most anxious to make peace, and his first act on his accession was to break Count Forgach as having been the author of the ultimatum sent to Servia which the young Emperor described as a criminal document. Forgach was a truly sinister person. Austria would have liked at this time to shake herself free from Germany but found it almost impossible, Germany having assumed complete control of the Austrian Army and all the Administration in touch with it.

A still further loss by death was that of Lord Cromer. He was overworked for his age, and worn out by the Dardanelles Commission, of which he was Chairman. A useless and unprofitable task.

A disagreeable incident in which I had to take a part at this time was the recall of Sir Alan Johnstone, our Minister at The Hague. Bethmann-Hollweg made a speech in the Reichstag in which he outlined possible German peace proposals. These appeared at once in the English Press, but because Johnstone, living in a limitrophe country, had not telegraphed them at length, Lloyd George decided that he was to be recalled. I did my utmost to protect Johnstone from this injustice, but Lloyd George insisted on his recall and would listen to no explanation.

It was on the 30th January 1917 that Austen Chamberlain and I obtained from the War Cabinet recognition of the principle of the representation of India at the Imperial Conference and the increase of import duties on cotton, but could obtain no assurance as to the future of the Excise Duty. These were concessions greatly appreciated in India, where much importance was attached to them.

In the early months of 1917 rumours reached the Foreign Office that

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Austria desired to open peace negotiations and that a certain Rizoff, Bulgarian Minister in Berlin, had been sent to Christiania and Stockholm on a peace mission. Sir Francis Hopwood, later Lord Southborough, was sent on a secret mission to ascertain what foundation there was for the report of a move for peace. It was ascertained, however, that Rizoff's aim was to bring about a separate peace between Germany, Bulgaria and Russia. He was coldly received by the Russian Minister, whom he endeavoured to impress with the irresistible might of Germany, and asserted that certain new war devices were to be used in the spring which would inevitably bring about the collapse of the Allied forces. Rizoff's mission proved abortive.

Another peace intrigue at this time was the visit of M. Caillaux to Italy when he proposed that France and Italy should make peace with Germany and become her allies, roping in at the same time, Spain, Portugal and Japan. All the weight of these countries was to be directed against England and Russia. This act of treachery was discovered and Caillaux was tried and condemned, but nevertheless has since been Minister of Finance !

It was in February 1917 that the intensive German submarine campaign began with a declaration of submarine blockade. Even at that time Germans were very depressed owing largely to the rapid deterioration of the food situation in Germany and could talk of nothing but peace, though buoyed up by the great things they were led to expect from the proposed intensified submarine campaign. Even the sinking of the *Laconia* and the death of two American ladies from exposure failed to induce President Wilson to declare war on Germany, though there was a rupture of diplomatic relations between the two countries. The deciding factor in producing the American declaration of war was the discovery that Germany was coquetting with Mexico and offering slices of U.S. territory as a bribe to Mexico to enter into the war. It was our own Secret Services that intercepted and decoded the telegrams betraying these intrigues which were communicated to the President and brought about the American declaration of war against Germany.

It was on the 1st February 1917 that the Germans began their campaign of frightfulness at sea, but although they succeeded in sinking a considerable number of merchant vessels, our Navy was singularly successful in sinking German submarines. During February between fifteen and twenty German submarines were known to have been destroyed, while an intercepted letter from a German Princess revealed the fact that on January 30th thirty submarines had not returned and that six, that were expected, had not returned

in the first half of February, all of which were considered as lost. As a matter of fact, hardly a day passed that our ships did not sink one or two submarines, but the fact was never announced, for obvious reasons. The absence of news was an exhausting weapon in our hands. In spite of the German submarine campaign more than 5,000 ships entered and left British ports every week. At the same time we were arming British merchant vessels at the rate of seventy per week. Nevertheless, in spite of our bagging submarines in considerable numbers (we destroyed six in ten days in May) our losses in shipping were very heavy, fifty ships being sunk in one week and half a million tons of shipping per month, while four million tons per annum was the limit of our building capacity. The Admiralty showed a lack of enterprise and energy in tackling the submarine question until they were stirred up by Lloyd George, who became increasingly concerned at our heavy losses in shipping and at the serious danger to our food supply. The convoy system was promptly organized and successfully practised, thus removing the danger of starvation, and wheat ships arrived in considerable numbers. Admiral Beatty made all the necessary dispositions and convoy after convoy arrived safely in British ports. It may be mentioned that the whole of the American Army arrived in France under British convoy without the loss of a single ship. There is no doubt that if the system had been applied earlier our losses would have been incomparably less. It was in consequence of the heavy losses from the submarine campaign that it became necessary to exercise a strict control of meat and wheat consumption, and we were all strictly rationed with really hardly enough food to work on.

The necessity for creating controls presented a fine opportunity to Lloyd George, who simply revelled in multiplying Government offices and Directorships, all of which was carried on with reckless extravagance, from the results of which the nation is still suffering. The complaint against Asquith's Government had been that there was a Cabinet of twenty-three. The popular rhyme on the Lloyd George Government was :

Wait and see, said the twenty-three,
Give us time, say the eighty-nine.

The latter figure was supposed to be the number of Lloyd George's Government, which nobody had then had the time or energy to count.

About this time the Germans obtained possession of one of our mail-bags containing a letter from me to Sir G. Buchanan which they published, thinking to do me harm. Mr. Dillon, an Irish revolutionary, read it out in the House of Commons. He did not like me on account of my report

on the Irish rebellion and thought to injure me, but Lloyd George and the Cabinet considered my letter a good one and approved of my keeping in touch with the Ambassadors abroad. The letter contained references to McKenna, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in connection with financial transactions between the Treasury and the Russian Government, accusing him of pedantry. He did not mind a bit, but wrote to me sheets to prove that he was not a pedant.

In the middle of March 1917 the Russian revolution broke out and was followed almost immediately by the abdication of the Emperor. The outlook was bad as the extremists gradually gained the upper hand and this presaged a separate peace between Russia and Germany which was soon to follow. One could not help feeling how easily the Emperor might have avoided the revolution if he had only listened to the recommendations of his well-wishers instead of being influenced by the reactionary views of the Empress. Her influence was truly baneful, but it was inspired by the hope of some day handing down to her son the Imperial autocracy unimpaired. From the very first day of the revolution the Emperor had only to come forward and associate himself with the Progressives and inaugurate a responsible Government to have had the whole of the nation at his back, but he was dissuaded from this course by the Empress. She little realized that in doing so she was signing her own death warrant and that of the whole of her family, while condemning her adopted country to complete destruction. The Emperor behaved with great dignity, as he naturally would do, but it would have been far better in every way not only for him, but for this country and for the world at large, if he had placed himself at the head of the liberal movement. Asylum in England was offered to the Imperial Family at the instance of the Russian Provisional Government, but the extremists in Petrograd would not allow them to leave and detained them as prisoners in Tsarskoe Selo.

There were two political events of importance during the month of April: the entry of America into the war, and the meeting of Ribot, Sonnino and Lloyd George at St. Jean de Maurienne on the Italian frontier. The entry of America into the war was an unduly delayed step, due entirely to President Wilson's lack of foresight and experience as to what would be Germany's eventual action and behaviour towards America and neutral countries. It was of course of great advantage to the Allies that a great and fresh country with unlimited supplies of men and materials should enter into the war when the Allies were already suffering from fatigue and losses

during three years of devastating war such as the world had never yet seen. It made the ultimate defeat of Germany certain. Nibbling at peace was however still in progress.

The meeting of the British, French and Italian Premiers at St. Jean would have been disastrous to British interests if the decisions arrived at had materialized. In order to meet the exigencies of the Italians, whom nothing could satisfy, it was decided to hand over Smyrna to Italy. Lloyd George was apparently unaware of the fact that the Port of Smyrna was the place of all others where British trade and interests, built up during 200 years, were predominant in the Levant. Italy had no interests there whatever. Nevertheless, this did not hinder Lloyd George from offering Smyrna to the Greeks a few months later. Ribot was naturally quite agreeable to this partition since he was anxious to avoid any sacrifice to Italy of French claims in the direction of Mersina. Moreover, the fact was eventually admitted by Marquis Imperiali, Italian Ambassador in London, that Sonnino promised the French Government a free hand in Greece if they would agree to the cession of Smyrna to Italy. This is only one example of how impossible it was to deal with our Allies, since British interests in Greece were by this pact to be entirely ignored by Italy and France, in spite of the fact that Great Britain was one of the guaranteeing Powers. Russia was also strongly opposed to the cession of Smyrna to Italy. The point of view of the Foreign Office was that, if Turkey was to be expelled from Europe, it would be absolutely essential to retain Smyrna as a port on the Ægean for the new Turkish state. After many vicissitudes Smyrna still remains an integral part of the Turkish Empire, though the Turks have not been expelled from Europe, as Lloyd George promised, and thereby created unrest amongst our Indian Mahomedan subjects.

On the return of Mr. Balfour from his mission to the United States, where by his statesmanship, sagacity and personal charm he greatly improved our political relations with the United States and smoothed over many difficulties in connection with American co-operation in the war, Lloyd George considered it desirable to send Lord Northcliffe, as a business hustler, to take Mr. Balfour's place. Northcliffe went over, making no secret that he hoped to effect some big *coup* for his own glorification and admitting that he knew nothing of the blockade and other questions with which he had to deal. He was a complete failure and returned to England in a few weeks' time. The Americans felt that they were as good business men as Northcliffe, and better hustlers than he, and they realized that

he had none of the charm or distinction that had endeared Balfour to them.

So likewise after Lord Milner's return from Russia, the French Government, having removed an incompetent Ambassador from St. Petersburg and sent M. Albert Thomas, a Labour leader of great ability, to replace him, Lloyd George thought it necessary to recall Sir George Buchanan, a very efficient Ambassador, and to send Mr. Henderson, a Labour leader, to replace him. Buchanan protested very strongly against his recall and the Foreign Office decided that he should remain. Henderson himself agreed since he realized that he would need some help and guidance in St. Petersburg, where he would find himself without any previous experience, in a position he had never even contemplated. Henderson's mission proved a complete failure. He succeeded in rubbing up the backs of Kerensky and the Russian Socialist Ministers, who had a very poor idea of his intelligence. In the end they never saw him and greatly preferred to deal with Sir G. Buchanan, whom they knew and trusted. As it was, Henderson did not play the game, since he told some of his friends at a party in St. Petersburg that he had only to lift his finger to have Buchanan recalled and to become Ambassador in his place. Henderson returned to London in a few weeks, having achieved nothing, but his mission was another example of mischievous meddling in Foreign Affairs.

Another intrigue, which failed only temporarily, was an effort to get rid of Lord Bertie from the Embassy in Paris in order to facilitate a rearrangement of the Cabinet. Fortunately it became known to *The Times* and, in the absence of Northcliffe in America, was exposed and strongly condemned in that journal. Lloyd George was furious and made a great row in *The Times* office, but it is an interesting fact that Mr. Balfour, the Foreign Secretary, knew nothing about it; not a word had been whispered to him by the Prime Minister or anybody else. That was the way in which foreign affairs and diplomacy were carried on at this time by Lloyd George with a Secretariat, nicknamed the Downing Street Kindergarten, run by Philip Kerr,¹ a charming young man, one of the Editors of the *Round Table*, but with no practical experience of Foreign Affairs.

During this period of the war it became the fashion under Lloyd George's guidance to talk and write of democracy as the only policy to follow to win the war. Under this cloak the Russian revolution with its horrors was belauded as an indication of the triumph of democracy and its leaders were

¹ Afterwards Marquess of Lothian and Ambassador to U.S.A.

MESOPOTAMIAN COMMISSION

exalted as the saviours of the world. Had it not been for the Russian revolution the war would have been won much earlier. In fact, the war was won in spite of the so-called and untrue democracy, and had it been lost it would have been due to the same false shibboleth.

Here I must diverge for a time to more personal matters. At an early stage in the war the Asquith Government promised official inquiries into the Gallipoli and Mesopotamian campaigns, and these sat in 1916, the report of the Mesopotamian campaign being published in June 1917. The commission that sat on the Mesopotamian campaign consisted of Lord George Hamilton as Chairman, General Sir N. Lyttelton, Admiral Sir C. Bridge, Lord Donoughmore, Lord Hugh Cecil¹ and Sir A. Williamson.² It should be observed that not one of these gentlemen had ever been to India, except General Lyttelton when a subaltern, nor had any of them any knowledge of Indian administration or affairs except Lord G. Hamilton, who had, many years earlier, been Secretary of State for India.

The report of the Commission when published was regarded by all those who knew anything of Indian affairs as unfair and narrow-minded, and as a travesty of fact and justice, giving the impression that the Mesopotamian campaign was the sole effort of India and the only preoccupation of the Government of India and the Indian Military Authorities. While 132 pages of closely printed matter were given to the report, only eight lines were given to the dangerous and anxious situation in the interior of India and on the frontier after India had sent no less than 300,000 troops across the seas to France, Egypt, China and East Africa. Everybody was blamed all round, beginning with Austen Chamberlain, the Secretary of State, and myself, and ending with many distinguished military officers. To achieve this end important official telegrams bearing on the issue were omitted and some mutilated while private letters were turned to mean the reverse of what was intended and important portions were omitted. It was really an inexplicable performance.

After the publication of the report on June 27th I tendered my resignation on June 30th to Mr. Balfour as Secretary of State, who refused to accept it. I also obtained permission to make in reply to the report of the Commission a personal statement in the House of Lords which was enthusiastically received in India and received commendation from moderate opinion in the Press and elsewhere. There was a prolonged debate in the House of Commons when Mr. Austen Chamberlain in disgust resigned his post in

¹ Afterwards Lord Quickswood.

² Afterwards Lord Forres.

the Government. I was violently attacked in the debate by Dillon and other members of the Irish Home Rule Party on account of my report on the rebellion in Ireland of the previous year. Their aim was to make me the scapegoat and to throw me to the wolves of the Press.

It was on July 9th that Lord Curzon came to see me at the Foreign Office and told me at some length that as an old friend he was the bearer of a message to me from the War Cabinet to the effect that the Government would not ask me to resign but that they made the suggestion to me to do so in order to "ease the situation of the Government and to avoid hostile criticism of the Foreign Office in the future"¹ which my position there might provoke. He spoke without interruption for about twenty minutes, while I was growing angrier every minute. When he stopped I let fly and told him that his action could hardly be described as that of a friend when he came as the emissary of a craven Cabinet to ask me to "ease the situation" for them by my self-sacrifice when they ought to be upholding the honour of and defending their faithful servants, and that if they had had the courage to do so they would have had public opinion at their back. After thirty-seven years of honourable service in some of the highest posts under the Crown I objected to anything that might imply censure where I could admit none, and that the only possible justification for the suggestion of the War Cabinet would be that I was either incompetent in the post I was holding or had committed an act unworthy of a gentleman. I was fairly wound up and told him very frankly what I thought of the War Cabinet, and of himself as a friend, in making such a proposal to me which I rejected with scorn. He slunk from my room like a whipped hound.

After consultation with Lord Stamfordham, Mr. Asquith, Lord Lansdowne, and Mr. Balfour, I wrote out my resignation for the second time on the evening of the 10th, and it was in Mr. Balfour's hands early on the 11th July. I heard nothing from Mr. Balfour, but on the morning of the 13th I read in *The Times* that Mr. Balfour had made a speech in the House of Commons in which he stated that he had refused to accept my resignation a second time and gave his reasons for so doing.

On the 17th July, realizing that Mr. Balfour's repeated refusal to accept my resignation might possibly entail the fall of Mr. Balfour as well as of myself, and appreciating what a serious loss Mr. Balfour's resignation would

¹ I wrote these words down the moment he left and found that he had used the same words to Mr. Balfour, whom he had seen previously, and who had declined to be a party to it.

be to the country, I told him that I wished to find some middle course which would meet my case without endangering his position ; I therefore suggested that I should be suspended pending the result of a *judicial* inquiry, without again offering my resignation which might place him in an invidious position, and which might even be regarded as disrespectful on my part after it had been twice refused.

Mr. Balfour regarded my proposal as reasonable and drew up in his own handwriting the following statement, which he sent to Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Bonar Law to be read in the House of Commons. It was as follows :

“ Lord Hardinge is exceedingly anxious to have his case judicially tried by a competent tribunal ; and as I deem him to have been very unjustly treated in connection with India's share in the early operations on the Tigris, I share his wishes for a proper inquiry.

“ He feels however that such an inquiry can hardly be held while he is actively discharging his duties at the Foreign Office. He has therefore tendered his resignation for the third time.

“ Though his case is plainly different from that of other officials whose duties, were they on active service, would be of the same character as those in respect of which they have received the animadversion of the Commission, it is nevertheless true that while his conduct is under judicial examination it will not be easy for him to devote his whole energies to the work of a laborious and difficult office. I have therefore consented to relieve him of his duties until the result of the enquiry is known.”

The War Cabinet discussed this proposal on the morning of July 18th, and realizing the weakness of their position, Mr. Bonar Law announced in the House of Commons the same afternoon that the Government “ had decided that it would be detrimental to the public interest if the Foreign Office were deprived, at the present juncture, of the services of Lord Hardinge of Penshurst as Permanent Under-Secretary of State, and has, therefore, refused his resignation which has been for the third time proffered ”. Mr. Balfour's statement was not read out.

On the motion for the adjournment of the House, moved by Mr. Dillon the House divided, with the result that there were 81 votes (almost entirely Irish) in favour of the adjournment and 176 against it.

Thus ended a very unpleasant interlude in my work but, thanks to Mr. Balfour's chivalrous championship, I came out on top in the fight for my reputation, which was dearer to me than life. The War Cabinet cut a sorry figure, for having sent Curzon on the 9th to suggest that I should

resign, they had to announce on the 18th that they had refused to accept my resignation, which I had offered for the third time ! The explanation was that I had made my resignation conditional on the institution of a judicial inquiry, and this the War Cabinet did not dare to face, for the Attorney-General (afterwards Lord Birkenhead) told the War Cabinet very plainly that not a single charge made against me would stand judicial investigation. What the Cabinet hoped for was that I would resign and then to have left me *en l'air* without any possible means of redress, but I was not such a fool as to walk into that trap and Balfour loyally supported me. The War Cabinet, who had been as frightened as hares, could only think of the clamour of the wolves for blood, and banished from their minds all ideas of justice and right, and had I been so weak as to listen to their suggestions my fate would have been sealed. I was more than justified by the manner in which the report of the Commission was exposed and discredited in the House of Commons by the Attorney-General, Chamberlain and Asquith and other lawyers such as Hemmerde, so much so that Lord George Hamilton, the Chairman of the Commission, felt so much the belabouring that it had received, that on July 16th he wrote a letter to *The Times* expressing a hope that no further action would be taken upon it.

After Bonar Law's statement in the House, a strong revulsion of feeling set in. The Press was condemned for goading public opinion without sufficient justification or thought, and it was realized that there were other factors of a vindictive character behind the agitation.

At the outset of the agitation the War Cabinet proposed to take disciplinary action against certain military officers, in fact to throw some of them to the wolves. A sub-committee of the War Cabinet was appointed, with Curzon as Chairman, to consider what disciplinary action should be taken. By chance Curzon's recommendations came into my hands, and they were worthy of him, drastic and cruel. In one case an officer, advanced in years and of very high rank, was to be dismissed from the service without even the pension he had earned. This officer could only be accused of incapacity in his actual position, there being not a whisper against his honour, and yet he was to be treated as though he had acted dishonourably or had been guilty of a crime. It made my blood boil to think of Curzon's callousness, while himself living in the lap of luxury, to have meditated bringing a distinguished officer and all his family to a state of penury, ending possibly in the workhouse. Happily his aims were not realized, for five of

the six officers concerned claimed, as their right, a military inquiry or court martial, and were all entirely rehabilitated by the Military Authorities.

Thus ended an episode which served only to throw discredit upon Lloyd George and the War Cabinet, but it naturally caused much anxiety and worry to many distinguished officers and myself. At its close Curzon admitted that having used the utmost pressure in this affair, all he had succeeded in doing was to secure the exchange of Montagu for Chamberlain as Secretary of State for India, a loss to the Unionist cause, and the prelude of long and serious unrest in India.

During the summer of 1917, and almost without a break till June 1918, excepting during the darkest winter months, there were constant raids on London of squadrons of German aeroplanes and Zeppelin airships. Although they did little harm, comparatively speaking, with the bombs which they dropped, it was fondly hoped by the German authorities that they would strike terror into the population and raise an outcry for the termination of the war. A certain amount of damage was done in London and these raids were certainly alarming while they lasted, but they had quite the opposite effect to what the Germans had anticipated, for there was no loss of morale, and when women and children were killed by bombs it made people set their teeth and all the more determined to defeat the Boches. Counter-measures were taken to meet the raids and a considerable number of aeroplanes and Zeppelins were brought down, while refuges were established in underground places for the poorer population who were unable to find safety for themselves. I witnessed a daylight raid of a large number of aeroplanes one morning at about 10.30 a.m. Very little damage was done, but it was very pretty to see the shells exploding all round the aeroplanes and one hoped to see them brought down before they were driven off. In Government offices such as the Foreign Office a bell was rung when a raid was signalled and all the female clerical establishment went to the basement while the raid lasted and they invariably behaved with great calm.

The only person who to my knowledge showed alarm under these circumstances was the Prime Minister, Lloyd George. He had a room in the basement of the Foreign Office, where the walls were so thick as to offer the greatest security, fitted up as a sitting-room and bedroom with sandbagged windows, and whenever a raid was reported he went there. On one occasion when a raid had been signalled about 2 p.m., and when all the female clerks were in the passage of the basement, I myself from an upper

window saw Lloyd George rush from No. 10, hatless, and with hair flying, into the Foreign Office to his sandbagged room.

During 1917 there were several abortive peace proposals, the chief amongst them having emanated from the Pope with a strong Austro-German ring about them, though they contained some points that Austria would hardly care to accept. They were generally regarded by the Allies as not tending to accelerate the advance of peace, while in Italy they were resented as weakening the war-spirit at a moment when the Italian offensive was in progress. This resentment was well founded, for it was found that the Italian Army was undermined by Socialist and clerical propaganda and on the Isonzo front a hundred thousand Italian soldiers laid down their arms without fighting, crying "Viva la pace". They said they were tired of war and would not fight during the winter. Our guns with that army were removed in safety but all the munitions and equipment were lost. The French guns could not be removed but were rendered unserviceable. In order to retrieve the Italian reverses we had to send two more British divisions from France into Italy, which we could hardly spare, and the French had to do the same. General Cadorna pressed the British Government for more heavy artillery, but this was refused as it was more greatly needed on the Western Front. The military situation in Italy raised considerable doubt in the minds of the Allies as to how far Italy would be able to co-operate with them during the forthcoming winter and whether the morale of the Italian Army would hold out. Happily, with the arrival of the British and French reinforcements, the Allied Armies secured a brilliant victory on the Piave and the German and Austrian Armies were in full retreat.

The early spring and summer of 1917 were spent in endeavouring to detach Austria from Germany, and had it not been for the tactlessness of the French Government this might possibly have been achieved. It was well known that the young Emperor Charles was sincerely desirous of peace and that he hated the war and deprecated the original cause of it. The most serious and hopeful step was a letter from the Emperor brought by Prince Sixte of Bourbon taking the first step towards peace negotiations. Our Government was naturally obliged to communicate and discuss the contents with the French Government who committed the folly of communicating it to the Press, with the result that the Emperor of Austria was disgusted and angry. The news naturally reached the Kaiser, who rushed off to Vienna, and the outcome of his visit was that Austria was bound more

ABORTIVE PEACE EFFORTS

closely to Germany than before. Personally I think it very doubtful whether it would have been possible for Austria to conclude a separate peace with the Allies since the whole of the Austrian Army and Military Administration was so interwoven with the German Army that it would have been almost impossible to separate them. Although in Austria there was a constant desire for peace almost at any price, there was at the same time a growing demand in Germany for peace but on terms that would have been quite unacceptable to the Allies. Germany still jibbed at the idea of restoring Alsace and Lorraine, the only concession that the German Government were ready to make being the restoration of Belgium with compensation for its devastation.

Another abortive effort to make peace and to detach Austria from the war was made in December 1917. Sir H. Rumbold, Minister at Berne, received information that Count Czenrin, Austrian Prime Minister, was prepared to send Count Mensdorff to meet a properly qualified delegate for the purpose of exchanging views on peace questions affecting only England and Austria. Lloyd George decided to send Général Smuts on a secret mission to meet Count Mensdorff. The meeting took place on December 18 at Geneva and General Smuts proposed a scheme of federation for Austria-Hungary which would have avoided the destruction of that Empire, but it appeared from Mensdorff's instructions that he was only authorized by Count Czenrin to propose a way for direct contact between British and German diplomacy. As this was not the object of General Smuts' mission he declined to have any dealings with the Germans, with the result that the negotiations were broken off on Mensdorff intimating that it was useless to try to bring about peace without including Germany.

In August 1917 the German Chancellor, in a speech in the Reichstag, challenged the French Government to deny that a secret treaty had been concluded between France and Russia on the subject of German territory on the left bank of the Rhine and that its substance had been communicated to the Chamber of Deputies at a secret session. The object of the Chancellor was to stir up dissension between France and England and at the same time to hearten up Germany to greater sacrifice and effort in the war. In a discussion in the Chamber of Deputies M. Ribot admitted that, in an agreement made by M. Doumergue in February 1917 with the Emperor, an undertaking was given to afford the support of Russia in making German territory on the left bank of the Rhine into an autonomous state with a view to protecting France and Belgium from invasion. This frank declara-

tion on the part of the French Prime Minister removed any possibility of misunderstanding between France and England, while the actual condition of Russia made the engagement given by the Emperor valueless. During the closing months of the year the moderate Socialists were ousted by Lenin and Trotsky, who obtained supreme power after severe fighting in Petrograd and Moscow. The Russian Army became entirely disorganized by the Soviet system and it became useless to hope for any more direct assistance from it to the Allied cause.

It is curious to recall that it was in defence of Russia that the Allies went to war, and that it was Russia that put the Allies "into the cart". This sort of thing never pays in the history of a nation, and the penalty in the end has to be paid. A sequel to this disorganization was the transfer of a large number of German divisions from the eastern to the western German front, followed by the release of hundreds of thousands of German prisoners of war in Russia, whose return home made a great difference to the manpower of Germany.

I was greatly saddened by the death in France of my former Military Secretary in India, Brigadier-General Frank Maxwell, V.C. He was one of the bravest men living and a very nice and capable man too. He felt very much that at the outbreak of the war I did not allow him to go off to France from India, but as a matter of fact it was after the outbreak of war that I, as Viceroy, had more need than ever of a really capable Military Secretary. He came home with me in 1916 and shortly afterwards commanded a battalion in France, won the D.S.O., and became a Brigadier. After his death General Birdwood wrote and told me that Maxwell's brigade happened to be absolutely alongside his Anzac division and that he had seen him and discussed with him the situation. They were friends, having both been on Kitchener's staff when he was C.-in-C. in India. It appears that Maxwell was going round his brigade positions to see to their consolidation, without a guide. He was walking along the Roulers railway when he saw a dug-out in front of him which he believed to be occupied by British and walked up to enter it. Unfortunately he must have walked beyond the Anzac position, for the dug-out was full of Germans, one of whom shot him through the head as he came up, and death must have been instantaneous. He was a brave soul but very rash and absolutely fearless.

My only surviving son Alec had about this time a near shave. His division of the Guards had a bad doing. Out of two companies of the Grenadiers that were in the front wave of the attack only three officers, of

whom Alec was one, came back. At one moment he found himself alone with a sergeant and three men in a position swept by machine-guns. He escaped with only a slight wound in the face. He did well in the attack on Gonnellieu and the Military Cross was awarded him by Sir D. Haig on the field of battle.

During this winter of 1917 doubts began to arise in the minds of some whether it would ever be possible to secure a conclusive victory over the enemy and whether it would not be better to make the best terms possible with Germany and thus terminate a war which, by its terrible sacrifices, was destroying civilization and all the nations of Europe. Amongst these were Lord Lansdowne and Lord Loreburn, both of whom had, at different times, been distinguished members of Mr. Asquith's Cabinet. Lord Lansdowne's pacifist sentiments created an incident which placed me in a difficult and painful position.

It was on November 16th that Lord Lansdowne wrote to Mr. Balfour suggesting a statement in Parliament correcting certain gross misrepresentations circulated by the Germans as to our peace terms. Mr. Balfour and Lord Lansdowne differed profoundly on the subject of the war, but Mr. Balfour saw no reason to differ from him as to the advantage to be gained from the contradiction of German misrepresentations. Lord Lansdowne put before Mr. Balfour a certain number of questions with the view of raising a discussion in the House of Lords on the war and war aims. Mr. Balfour replied deprecating such discussion, as the points put to him were of a controversial nature. On the 26th November after the Memorial Service for Neil Primrose, who had been killed in action in Palestine, Lord Lansdowne met Mr. Balfour and told him that he had given up the idea of raising a debate in the House of Lords and had decided to write a letter to the Press. As Mr. Balfour was leaving for Paris the next day, Lord Lansdowne asked permission to show the letter to me in order that it should not contain any points of detail or inaccuracies that might conflict with the views of the Foreign Office. Mr. Balfour agreed, saying, "Hardinge knows my views."

It was on the 27th November that I received a message from Lord Lansdowne asking me to call at his house on my way home from the Foreign Office. I was under the impression that he wished to speak to me of a matter upon which we had had some correspondence, but on my arrival he proceeded to explain to me all that had passed between him and Mr. Balfour. He made it clear to me that his decision to send a letter to the Press was final, and that my assistance was invoked, with Mr. Balfour's approval,

simply as a technical expert. He handed me the draft letter asking me to read it and criticize any points that might occur to me. I read it with care and made a few technical criticisms, some of which were accepted. I did not like the tone of the letter and said so to Lord Lansdowne since, while dealing with German misrepresentations, it was at the same time a plea for immediate negotiations for a general peace. I learnt afterwards that the letter was sent in the first instance to the Editor of *The Times*, who refused to publish it. It was then sent to Lord Burnham, who published it in the *Daily Telegraph*, having been informed by Lord Lansdowne that Mr. Balfour knew all about the letter and that I had approved of it. Both statements were incorrect.

The publication of the letter, emanating from so distinguished a statesman and former Foreign Secretary as Lord Lansdowne, created a great uproar and a chorus of violent disapproval in the Press. By that letter Lord Lansdowne forfeited in a day all the confidence that the nation had reposed in him for many years after so long and distinguished a career. It was a deplorable *débâcle* which was never forgotten. Lord Burnham was very much upset by the unfavourable reception of the letter he had agreed to publish, which he had understood had been approved by the Foreign Office, and asked the Prime Minister to make a statement in the House. Lloyd George sent for me and asked for my version of what had taken place and completely exonerated me of any responsibility for this most unfortunate letter. I took care at the same time to let Lord Lansdowne know that I took exception to the statement that he had made to Lord Burnham.

CHAPTER XVI

L O N D O N , 1 9 1 8 — 1 9 2 0

IT was on the 21st March 1918 that the great German offensive, for which they had been preparing for many months, began. Their principal attack was directed with over forty divisions against the 5th Army, and although they fought with the utmost gallantry the Army was driven back with considerable disorganization. It was hard on Sir H. Gough, the Commander, for Sir G. Macdonogh, the Director of Military Intelligence, who had just returned from the front, told me two days before the attack of the concentration of the forty German divisions in front of the 5th Army and said that it would be impossible to withstand the attack if launched. His words were prophetic, but I wondered why the French did not give General Gough in the first instance the support that they had to give later in order to check the German advance on Amiens and Abbeville. So alarming did the prospect become that the Belgian Government, who had made their headquarters at Havre, asked permission to transfer themselves to London in the event of the German advance being continued. Happily this failed, sufficient British and French troops having been hurried up to hold back the German advance. In this advance they had lost 700,000 men, so that their strength was greatly weakened.

During this fighting Alec's battalion of the Grenadiers had the worst possible time. That battalion with two others of the Guards had to hold a line of 9,000 yards for a whole day against a German division until reinforcements came up, the position being one of great gravity since they were told that there was nothing between them and the sea. They held the line for the whole day against repeated attacks, but there were very few of them left at the end. The result was that these battalions had to go to the rear to wait for drafts, for which I was not sorry.

In the meantime American troops were pouring into France, and England and France were slowly but surely obtaining supremacy in the air, while owing to new inventions for tracing submarines under water and better

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In the meantime American troops were pouring into France, and England and France were slowly but surely obtaining supremacy in the air, while owing to new inventions for tracing submarines under water and better

nets and more watchful tactics, the German submarine menace was being slowly but surely and successfully tackled. It was calculated that more submarines were being destroyed than could be simultaneously built.

British diplomacy suffered two very severe blows during the early months of 1918. Sir C. Spring Rice, British Ambassador in Washington, died at Ottawa while on a visit to the Governor-General. I knew him very well as we had worked together in the Foreign Office and he had been Counsellor while I was Ambassador in St. Petersburg. He was a charming man of great intellectual ability and of wide views. He had a most difficult position in Washington, which he filled with wonderful tact, and in his dealings with the American Government he never made a mistake. This is saying a great deal. His death was deeply and universally regretted.

The second blow was the unexpected recall of Lord Bertie from Paris. He had been there for several years and with all his eccentricities he enjoyed a unique position in that capital. He was in many ways an ideal Ambassador, with his cheerful and good-looking countenance surrounded by curly grey hair. He was full of amusing repartee, while his insight into French politics and French character was never at fault. The correctness of his forecasts used to astonish me. The French Government respected him greatly and allowed him considerable latitude in his representations to them as they recognized that they were genuine. His mode of recall was a scandal. Lloyd George was anxious to move Derby from the War Office to make a change there, and realized that the only way to retain Derby's electoral influence in Lancashire was to give him the Paris Embassy. One afternoon in April I received from Mr. Balfour instructions, to my great surprise, to see M. Cambon, and to ask him to submit to the French President Lord Derby's name as Ambassador in Paris in the place of Lord Bertie. I asked if Bertie had been informed of his recall and was told that it was not so. I made a very vigorous protest to Balfour against the shameful treatment of an excellent Ambassador who had done more than half a century of public service without blame of any kind. Balfour was moved by what I said and sent a long and conciliatory telegram to Bertie, while I made to Cambon the request I had been requested to make. He received it with great surprise and deep emotion, for he fully realized the value of Bertie in Anglo-French relations. The French Government were frankly annoyed but naturally could say nothing. Bertie took it philosophically and like a gentleman. He was ill at the time but cleared out of the Embassy as soon as he was well enough to do so. He left France with the good wishes of all

who knew him, but he died in England within two years of his return. I had known him well for over forty years. We had always been friends and when I was a young man in the Diplomatic Service he had often given me official help and friendly advice. I greatly regretted his death.

In the early months of 1918 Germany made peace with Russia by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, a Bolshevik Treaty. I felt glad to think that Count Benckendorff, the Russian Ambassador in London, was dead, and felt sorry for his widow living in London.

The dangers arising from this Treaty were fully realized by the Allied Governments and a Conference was held in Paris to discuss the possible danger of the Germans manning the Russian Black Sea Fleet and making their way through the Straits into the Mediterranean. To meet this danger the Italian Government were asked to send a certain number of battleships from Taranto to Corfu, and to agree to the appointment of a British Admiralissimo in the Mediterranean. The Italian naval staff at the Conference flatly refused to accept this proposal, declaring that Italian battleships would not go to Corfu because it was dangerous for them to do so, and the Chief of the Naval Staff added that the Italian warships had been in harbour for 1½ years and had not lost a single ship, which was more than the British Navy could say. This provoked smiles. He further added that the ships would only come out of harbour if one or other of their Allies was in danger, but even then only if it was safe ! As a matter of fact, ships that had been in harbour for more than six months were of no practical use owing to the lack of practice of their crews.

In June and July the situation on the Western Front was very precarious. The Germans had pushed so far in the direction of Amiens and Abbeville, until they were stopped by the concentration of French and British troops in front of them, that the situation of Paris was one of grave danger. Had the Germans been wise they would have elected to push forward to the north in the direction of the Channel ports, but to them the attraction of taking Paris and the prestige that would arise from it were too great for them to be able to resist. They therefore commenced preparations for a great offensive towards Paris, and during June and July the situation there was extremely trying, since air raids took place every night and "Big Bertha" fired a certain number of rounds every day into the heart of the city. The people were nevertheless very calm. In the meantime the Allies were awaiting the renewal of the German offensive but were exerting pressure upon the German front all the time.

The German offensive commenced in April by an attack upon the front held by two Portuguese divisions. At this time there were concentrated behind the fighting lines at one point half a million American troops with a quarter of a million in reserve, but not yet fit to take the field as armies. There were only four or five American divisions helping the French and none in the English line. And yet they have since had the pretension to say it was they who won the war !

It was in July 1918 that the news first reached this country of the murder of the Emperor of Russia by the Bolsheviks at Tobolsk, but it was not till several months later that all the details came to light of the wholesale assassination of the Imperial Family with all its hideous detail. The news of the fiendish massacre of the Empress and her daughters created a feeling of disgust and resentment against the Bolsheviks that nothing can ever remove.

On the 23rd September 1918 I had the misfortune to break my leg while walking with Lady Northbrook, to whom I was showing my garden. There had been a heavy shower of rain and I slipped up on the wet grass of a slope. It was most unfortunate, as it laid me up for two months, just at a time when there was a great deal to do, but it had the compensating advantage of giving me a good rest, which I greatly needed.

It was about this time that much to my regret Sir Francis Campbell, one of the Under-Secretaries at the Foreign Office, died. I valued his work very highly and still more his unfailing friendship.

Mr. Balfour asked me to recommend a successor to Sir W. Langley. After much thought I decided to recommend Sir William Tyrrell,¹ who had been doing very good work as Head of the Political Intelligence Department, and as Mr. Balfour approved my suggestion I asked Tyrrell to come to see me at Oakfield, when I told him I was authorized to offer him the post, which he accepted. My selection has been more than justified by his later career as Head of the Foreign Office. I have known him since he was about 12 years and I always had a very high opinion of his ability, and especially of his political *flair*.

During these autumn months the German invasion was being steadily thrust back and the Allies assumed the position of a complete superiority to the enemy. The Germans were defeated on every front and slowly but steadily retreated. The first Power to throw up the sponge was Bulgaria, and this was soon followed by the flight of the German Emperor into Holland and the proclamation of a German republic. Finally an

¹ Afterwards Lord Tyrrell of Avon.

armistice was concluded with Germany on the 11th November, and I remember the date well, as it was the day that I moved to London after my accident. On my way to London the news of peace was gradually spreading and there were more and more flags to be seen as we approached Town. The feeling of relief that peace, so long hoped for, had at last come, was indescribably intense. I felt so happy to think that there would no longer be any war risks for Alec, and there must have been hundreds of thousands of others who felt the same as regards their own.

Shortly after the conclusion of the Armistice the King paid an official visit with the Queen to Paris, where Their Majesties met with a very enthusiastic reception. At the King's request I wrote the speeches he made at the reception at the Hôtel de Ville and at the State Banquet at the Élysée.

Mr. Wilson, the American President, also paid an official visit to London on his way to Paris for the Peace Conference and had a good reception from the public.

During the preceding six months great preparations had been made for a Peace Conference by the Foreign Office. Handbooks on all the countries or questions likely to be involved in the negotiations had been carefully prepared, and even draft treaties as models had been drawn up.

In preparing for the peace negotiations two cardinal principles had been carefully borne in mind in the organization worked out at the Foreign Office. One was that time was the essence of any good settlement and that delays would prove fatal; the other was that any treaty stipulation not likely to promote lasting peace should be avoided. To secure these ends full provision was made for devolution in the Peace Conference, so that the several questions could be dealt with not only expeditiously but concurrently, and a qualified staff of negotiators, limited in number but with knowledge of the questions under discussion and able to discuss in French, had been carefully selected to act under the British Plenipotentiaries. Unfortunately Mr. Lloyd George, whose knowledge of many of the problems involved was non-existent, insisted on employing a staff of his own unofficial creation who had no knowledge of French and none of diplomacy, and the Foreign Office organization was consequently stillborn. To this attitude of Lloyd George nearly all the mistakes are in my judgment due.

Members of the Staff to go to Paris had been selected with care, and arrangements made for their accommodation in Paris, as well as for the

establishment of a private printing press, offices to work in, etc. To meet the needs of the British Delegation, two hotels were hired, the Hotel Majestic being devoted to the housing of the Staff and the Hotel Astoria as offices. The whole of the organization for the Peace Conference fell upon the Foreign Office and directly upon me. I was charged by the Government with the necessary preparations and supervision of all details. It was a very difficult and thankless task, for although the Staff from the Foreign Office was only eighteen in all, the War Office, Admiralty, Board of Trade and Colonial Office ran the numbers up to 200, and there was an additional staff of 200 shorthand-writers, etc. Consequently the permanent British Delegation to be housed at the Hotel Majestic amounted to about 400 in all, while there were constantly Cabinet Ministers and other officials who arrived for consultation with the Prime Minister or Mr. Balfour, who had also to be housed with their followers or dependants. There was no end to their demands and exigencies and I soon found it necessary to have a special staff to deal with them.

As stated above, the Armistice was signed on the 11th November and Mr. Lloyd George considered it necessary to have what his opponents called a "Khaki" election in order to increase his majority and to stabilize his position. Nobody in the country wanted this election except Lloyd George, and the country would have gladly been spared the turmoil attendant upon it, but he achieved his desire and was returned by a big majority. This had an unfortunate result in unduly delaying the meeting of the Peace Conference, and it was not until two months after the Armistice that the Peace Plenipotentiaries and the Conference met in Paris. Had a peace been negotiated and concluded immediately after the Armistice, everything would have been so much easier, and time would not have been given to develop differences of opinion amongst the Allies upon questions at issue. It was not till the 12th of January that any conversations between the Prime Ministers began.

President Wilson had arrived in Paris some weeks before the Peace Conference was opened. On his arrival he was received with the utmost enthusiasm by the French Government, public and Press. The old friendship in arms, and the Lafayette traditions were trotted out on every possible occasion, not only as emphasizing the traditional policy of friendship between France and America but as a token of the support desired by the French Government in the realization of their aims which they hoped to see embodied in the Treaty of Peace with Germany. There is no doubt

that when the President paid his official visit to London he came with a certain prejudice against England, but from the very moment of the opening of the Conference the British Delegation found themselves working hand in hand with the American Delegation, whose views closely coincided with their own. After a very short experience the President, with his idealistic views, found that he could not understand the materialism of French and Italian views and mentality while English common sense and moderation appealed to him. In conversation he said more than once that in the reconstruction of the world he only wished that the British would take in hand more than they were willing to do. A very flattering tribute to British administration, but not one that would appeal to either the French or the Italians. The French were not slow in discovering the President's disillusion and before two months had passed he had lost entirely his position in Paris. On his arrival he had been regarded as a *deus ex machina*, but in a few weeks' time he was treated with scant respect, particularly by the French Press, which by its hostile criticisms caused him intense irritation. He went so far as to announce that if the Press continued to make their attacks upon America and American policy the Conference would have to be moved elsewhere. When a picture of Wilson was shown at a cinema, instead of being greeted with cheers and the music of "The Star-spangled Banner", as had always happened in the early days of the President's presence in Paris, it was received in absolute silence. At the same time Paris was crowded with American officers and soldiers, many of whom paid no attention to French customs or susceptibilities, while there was a good deal of brawling in the streets and conflicts with the French police, and to these causes undoubtedly the unpopularity of America and Americans in Paris was largely due.

It was in the second week of January that informal conversations between the Chief Delegates began and these were carried on for several days without any more of the difficult questions being approached. The Chief Delegates, named the "Big Four", were President Wilson, Lloyd George, Clemenceau and Orlando. Ishii, the Japanese Ambassador in Paris, represented Japan when any question affecting the Far East came under discussion. It should be pointed out that in view of the fact that President Wilson and Lloyd George could only speak English, while Clemenceau and Ishii both spoke English fluently, English became the language of the discussions and negotiations, and the unfortunate Italian Representative, Signor Orlando, who spoke only French and Italian, was

establishment of a private printing press, offices to work in, etc. To meet the needs of the British Delegation, two hotels were hired, the Hotel Majestic being devoted to the housing of the Staff and the Hotel Astoria as offices. The whole of the organization for the Peace Conference fell upon the Foreign Office and directly upon me. I was charged by the Government with the necessary preparations and supervision of all details. It was a very difficult and thankless task, for although the Staff from the Foreign Office was only eighteen in all, the War Office, Admiralty, Board of Trade and Colonial Office ran the numbers up to 200, and there was an additional staff of 200 shorthand-writers, etc. Consequently the permanent British Delegation to be housed at the Hotel Majestic amounted to about 400 in all, while there were constantly Cabinet Ministers and other officials who arrived for consultation with the Prime Minister or Mr. Balfour, who had also to be housed with their followers or dependants. There was no end to their demands and exigencies and I soon found it necessary to have a special staff to deal with them.

As stated above, the Armistice was signed on the 11th November and Mr. Lloyd George considered it necessary to have what his opponents called a "Khaki" election in order to increase his majority and to stabilize his position. Nobody in the country wanted this election except Lloyd George, and the country would have gladly been spared the turmoil attendant upon it, but he achieved his desire and was returned by a big majority. This had an unfortunate result in unduly delaying the meeting of the Peace Conference, and it was not until two months after the Armistice that the Peace Plenipotentiaries and the Conference met in Paris. Had a peace been negotiated and concluded immediately after the Armistice, everything would have been so much easier, and time would not have been given to develop differences of opinion amongst the Allies upon questions at issue. It was not till the 12th of January that any conversations between the Prime Ministers began.

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unable to take any serious part in the discussions and was left hopelessly out in the cold. So disgusted was Orlando at one moment as to his enforced inactivity owing to the language question, that he left Paris and the remaining three of the Big Four were very anxious as to whether he would return, but he did so.

No written records were made of what took place at the meetings of the "Big Four", with the result that the conclusions at which the Delegates arrived were always open to doubt and discussion, especially as, to one of them at least, they were unintelligible.

It was only after the Conference had been sitting for a whole month in Paris and after the "Big Four" had made every possible mistake, that President Wilson and the other Delegates who had considered that they knew a great deal more about the necessary conditions of peace than their experts, realized what a hopeless tangle they were getting into and advocated the calling in of the experts, who at once formed the necessary committees to solve the questions at issue and to make recommendations to the Conference. Of course this ought to have been the very first step to have been taken at the opening of the Conference, but these great political luminaries thought they knew better, and President Wilson even hazarded the remark that Commissions and Committees were quite unnecessary and that the Representatives of the five Powers would settle everything off the reel. During the first six weeks nothing was done except to subordinate everything to the discussion of an embryo League of Nations, and to make flowery speeches at the Plenary Meetings which convinced nobody.

One of the most interesting and statesmanlike speeches at a Plenary Meeting was made by Sheikh Feisal, the representative of the King of the Hedjaz, and it was very impressive. He praised our people for all they had done in Palestine and Syria in ejecting the Turks, and Pichon, the French Foreign Minister, interrupting him, stupidly asked what France had done to help him and the King of the Hedjaz in those countries. Feisal, with the greatest readiness, at once commenced a eulogy of the French Government for the assistance they had given during the Syrian campaign, drawing special attention to the fact that the French had sent a small contingent with four antiquated guns and two new ones to join his forces. He said it all with such politeness and in such a way that the most hypercritical person could not possibly take offence, and of course Pichon was sorry he had spoken and looked a fool.

Before I arrived in Paris for the Peace Conference the Grand Duke Alexander Michailovitch of Russia, having left his wife, the Grand Duchess Xenia in the Crimea, applied to Lord Derby for permission to proceed to England. This Grand Duke, who had held a high post in the Russian Navy, had always been most hostile to Great Britain and had made no secret of his sentiments during the seven years that I had spent in St. Petersburg where I had known him well. He was leading quite publicly a disreputable life in Paris, and had attended a big dinner on the day that he received the news of the murder by the Bolsheviks of his brother, the Grand Duke Serge Michailovitch. The Government refused permission for him to come to England, but in view of his persistence the King expressed the wish that, on my arrival in Paris, I should seek an interview with the Grand Duke and explain to him the impossibility of his coming to England at that juncture. This I did as soon as I got to Paris and the Grand Duke received my explanations quite courteously. He made one interesting remark. He expressed his conviction that the Emperor and Empress of Russia were still alive and in concealment, and that, from information that he had received, the story of their assassination had been fabricated in order to facilitate their removal.

In February of that year an attempt was made on Clemenceau's life. He was fired at by a lunatic while walking home from a meeting of the Conference. He excited general admiration by the courage that he showed on the occasion and by his early return to his political duties with the bullet still in his lung. The doctors did not care to remove it owing to his suffering from some form of illness which would have made an operation dangerous.

Affairs in Egypt were going badly at this time. The extremists under Zagloul Pasha by their demands were making the administration of their country difficult, if not impossible. The agitation there could, as in many other countries at that time, be traced to that unfortunate phrase invented by President Wilson, "self-determination", as the principle to be applied to all countries and all peoples. Sir R. Wingate, the High Commissioner, who had been suffering from ill health, was at home in England on leave and the Agency was in the hands of Sir M. Cheetham, who could not be described as a strong man. The Government, i.e. Lloyd George and Balfour, decided that strong measures should be taken to restore British prestige and to administer a check to the extremists. They decided to appoint General Allenby commanding the troops in Palestine, as High

Commissioner in Egypt. All will admit that he was a fine soldier, that he had succeeded admirably in his campaign in Syria and that he was generally popular and respected. He was popularly known as "The Bull", from his big and bluff appearance, and it was imagined by Lloyd George that in him he had found a strong man who would impose the views of the British Government upon the Sultan and would defeat the Nationalists. No greater mistake was ever made. I knew well how difficult the Egyptian machine was to run, and I realized the necessity for a skilled diplomatist and administrator to deal with a very difficult and complicated situation. As in duty bound I urged these considerations very strongly upon Mr. Balfour, but to no purpose, as Lloyd George thought that through Allenby he would be able to administer a severe lesson to the Egyptians. Allenby was summoned to Paris, where he received ample instructions from Lloyd George and full power to carry out a firm and strong policy in Cairo, which he promised to carry out immediately on his arrival. He left at once for Egypt, but when he reached Cairo he proved himself quite unfit to cope with the Egyptians, and, to Lloyd George's intense dismay, he absolutely climbed down and granted the extremists everything they had asked for. It was indeed a miserable affair and Lloyd George and Balfour felt deeply the humiliation of the situation, but they did not dare to recall Allenby so soon after his appointment, nor did they consider it prudent to undo the concessions he had already made. Allenby was therefore left alone, Lloyd George having other fish to fry, but this was the actual beginning of the loss of British prestige in Egypt, and the end of a situation which had been carefully built up during Lord Cromer's wise régime of a quarter of a century in that country. The mischief that can be done to a country through ignorance, even with the best intentions, is incalculable.

The situation in Russia under a Bolshevik Government was one which could hardly fail to be scrutinized by a Conference of Powers seated in Paris. Opinions were divided as to whether the Bolsheviks should be put down by force or not. Lloyd George and President Wilson were both strongly opposed to military action against them, which in the opinion of the Military Authorities would necessitate the employment of two or three hundred thousand men. In this I think they were right, though their motive was in reality a certain amount of sympathy with the Bolsheviks, whom they regarded as having overthrown an autocratic Government under the influence of a policy of self-determination. To meet the situation President Wilson made an absurd proposal which

ABORTIVE PRINKIPO PROPOSAL

received the warm support of Lloyd George. It was to invite representatives of the Bolsheviks, of General Kolchak who was fighting against them, of the moderate Russians associated with Sazonoff, of the Esthonians, Latvians, Lithuanians and Ukrainians to meet in conference on the island of Prinkipo in the Sea of Marmora and there to set forth their views with a view to finding a peaceful solution of the situation in Russia, a general truce in Russia being proclaimed in the meantime. Invitations were sent out and even the question of hotel accommodation in Prinkipo was investigated, but the scheme in the end proved abortive and the idea was dropped. Lloyd George dined with me at the Hotel Majestic one evening and discussed the proposal. I pointed out to him that of those invited probably only the Bolsheviks would accept and would send representatives to make propaganda and to show that the Soviet Government did in fact meet with some measure of recognition on the part of the Powers. I asked him what would happen if only the Bolsheviks appeared at Prinkipo. He replied that it would then be a "wash-out" for the others. I pointed out that this would leave everything in exactly the same position as before, and that it would be the proposal itself that would be the real "wash-out". He was however at that time so convinced that it was a practical proposal that he offered me the post of Commissioner as British Representative at the Conference, which I declined without hesitation. He asked me if I could recommend to him anybody who would be suitable. I told him that as I had heard Lord Cecil speaking in favour of the scheme he might be willing to go if the post were offered to him. He did offer it to Cecil but he declined and Lloyd George then offered the post to Sir Robert Borden, the Canadian delegate, who accepted the offer. But as stated above, the proposal never materialized.

Another project which did materialize and with disastrous results all round was the occupation of Smyrna by the Allies. Since the "Big Four", to satisfy the claims and pretensions of France and Italy, were promising them large slices of Turkey in Asia, while Greece, who had done nothing in the war, was clamouring for her share in what she regarded as her legitimate inheritance, the Conference came to the conclusion that it would be desirable to occupy Smyrna so as to have something actually in hand when the moment for settlement arrived with the Turks. Now Smyrna had, for more than 200 years, been the centre of British trade with Turkey. British interests in Smyrna of a commercial nature were of incalculable value; the port was always full of British shipping, and

the British Colony had established itself in the large and flourishing garden city near by named Bournabat. This action was ordered and taken without consultation or advice from those who knew anything about the question at issue, the "Big Four" in their supreme self-confidence being apparently of opinion that anything they decided could not go wrong. They were rudely mistaken. The expulsion of the Turks from Smyrna by the Allied Forces was achieved, not without bloodshed, but that was not all. In the early weeks of the Conference M. Venezelos of Cretan reputation arrived as Greek Delegate. When he first aired his views to the "Big Four" he found himself well snubbed for his pains. But M. Venezelos was in many ways by far the cleverest man at the Peace Conference, and recognizing at once the extraordinary ignorance of the "Big Four" on all Eastern questions, he laid himself out gradually to captivate them, and he succeeded so well that in a few weeks' time he was a *persona gratissima* to them all. It was he who egged on the "Big Four" in the Allied occupation of Smyrna and as soon as this had been accomplished he pressed upon them the Greek claim to Smyrna and the readiness of Greek troops to hold Smyrna in the interests of the Allies. Lloyd George, who had listened to Venezelos and who was anxious for political reasons in England to withdraw the British contingent from Smyrna, warmly supported Venezelos' views, with the result that the Allied forces were withdrawn and Greek troops occupied Smyrna. The Turks, who were willing to tolerate the presence of Allied troops in Smyrna but resented the substitution of Greek troops, showed at once their determination to turn them out, and the Greeks, once established in Asia Minor, decided to expand and to occupy as much of the interior as possible. The result during the following year was a serious Turco-Greek campaign in which the Greeks were finally driven into the sea and Smyrna was burnt to the ground. This was a further example of the imaginary omniscient but misguided policy of the "Big Four".

At this time the situation in Poland, where the new Republic found itself situated between Russia and Germany, both in a hostile mood, was one of great difficulty. P. Wyndham had been sent there on a temporary mission, but it was necessary to send there without delay an experienced Minister. The Minister who impressed me as the most capable to fill this difficult post was Sir H. Rumbold, who had served under me as Secretary at Tehran and in the Foreign Office and was then Minister at Berne. Although on casual acquaintance he might appear to be an ordinary

person, he was in my opinion one of the shrewdest and cleverest persons in the Diplomatic Service. I put his name forward to Mr. Balfour and my suggestion was accepted, and what pleased me was that from a letter I received from him almost immediately afterwards I learnt that what he really desired was to be sent to Warsaw. Rumbold was one of those diplomatists who will never let the Government down. He had done admirably at Berne; he did still better at Warsaw. A year later Lloyd George was not quite satisfied with the position in Poland and sent Lord D'Abernon from Berlin on a special mission to supervise Rumbold. After a month in Warsaw he reported that it was quite useless for him to stay there since Rumbold was "King of Warsaw". I rejoice to think that later I was instrumental in getting Rumbold sent to Constantinople as High Commissioner, where he succeeded admirably by his tact and wisdom at a moment when we were in very serious danger of war with Turkey.

Reverting to the progress of the Peace Conference, President Wilson had to return to the United States in order to be present at the opening of Congress on the 4th March, and he only got back to Paris on the 14th of that month. This entailed still further delay in the negotiations and little progress was made during his absence. The German representatives to conclude the Treaty were invited to come to Paris and arrived at the end of April at the Hôtel des Reservoirs, Versailles, where they were kept in absolute seclusion and almost like prisoners. The conditions of peace were even then incomplete in many respects and the Treaty was not ready for communication to them until a week after their arrival. The whole proceeding in inviting the Germans to Paris and in keeping them waiting at Versailles a whole week was lacking in courtesy and dignity and reflected on the businesslike qualities of the Allies. Before the adoption of the actual peace terms they were referred to a plenary meeting of all the Delegations at which I was present. To the surprise of everybody Marshal Foch, who was one of the French Peace Delegates, before the close of the meeting, stood up and made an impassioned protest against the proposed Treaty and particularly against the suggested scheme of evacuation of the zones on the left bank of the Rhine. He urged that it was impracticable from a military point of view and exposed France to great dangers, and he pressed for its modification. He made no secret that he would be satisfied only with the Rhine as frontier. It was a very improper action on the part of the Marshal, whose objections should have been

imparted to his own Delegation, of which he was a member, and the difference of his and their views should not have been publicly exposed at a plenary meeting of the Conference. Clemenceau was evidently very much annoyed at this unexpected incident which he tried to stop, and failing to do so he closed the Conference without a word as soon as the Marshal sat down. There was, as far as I know, no sequel to the incident.

I represented the British Delegation when the terms of the Treaty were communicated to the German Delegates. This took place at the Hôtel du Petit Trianon at Versailles. I felt some sympathy for Count Rantzau, the Head of the German Delegation, whom I had previously known as a diplomatist at St. Petersburg, in view of the humiliation he must have felt in receiving the Treaty from the hands of M. Cambon, late French Ambassador in Berlin. It was difficult for the latter to conceal the satisfaction that he felt at the tables being turned, for he was at the outbreak of war ejected from Berlin with the utmost indignity. Count Rantzau received the text of the Treaty in a dignified speech in which he expressed the hope that a discussion of the terms would be permitted. This proposal was immediately rejected by M. Cambon, who stated that no verbal discussion of the Treaty would be permitted but that any views that the Germans wished to put forward must be communicated to the Powers in writing. When the terms of the Treaty were referred to Berlin it was not surprising that they provoked a vigorous protest, which was duly communicated to the "Big Four". Their chief objections were to the alienation of the Saar Valley and Upper Silesia, for they realized that by the loss of these territories their economic development would be seriously hampered in the future. The French, however, were adamant upon these two points, since, if Germany were no longer in possession of the Saar Valley and Upper Silesia, she would have very great difficulty in preparing for and carrying on a protracted war, these provinces having been the principal sources for the provision of raw material for war munitions. As a result of the German protest Lloyd George called a meeting of the British Cabinet in Paris, when it was decided to urge that concessions should be made to the Germans. Could any result be more deplorable after five months' discussion of the terms of peace? It looked as though the work of the Conference would have to be recommenced and it was a damaging reflection on the foresight and political acumen of Lloyd George to have imagined that such a treaty could have had any other

SIGNING THE TREATY

result. In any case the French refused to make any concessions and the Treaty was eventually accepted by the German Government, but Count Rantzau resigned as he refused to sign it. It was with great difficulty that the German Government found Plenipotentiaries willing to sign so humiliating a treaty.

The Treaty was eventually signed by all the Plenipotentiaries in the Salle des Glaces of the Palace of Versailles in the presence of a large number of people, amongst whom I was present. It might well have been a ceremony of much dignity and historic interest, but I regret to say that owing to the manner in which it was conducted those who were present can only recall it with a sense of disgust and dissatisfaction. The Plenipotentiaries were massed round a horseshoe table with the Treaty for signature on a table in the middle. Each Plenipotentiary signed the Treaty in alphabetical order of the countries who were signatories. While this was in progress the Plenipotentiaries were talking to their friends in the audience and people of all kinds and descriptions were going round the table with autograph books. As soon as the signing was concluded there was a general *sauve qui peut*.

The same unbusinesslike procedure that had occurred with the German Delegation was repeated with the Austrian who, in accordance with an invitation received by them from the Conference, arrived at St. Germain in the middle of May when nothing had so far been settled except the frontiers of the reduced State. After some weeks' delay a treaty was submitted to them in the Palace at St. Germain under the same conditions as the German Treaty. I was present on that occasion as representing the British Delegation.

A still more regrettable procedure occurred as regards the Turkish Delegation, who on their own initiative and with the sanction of the "Big Four" arrived in Paris towards the end of June with a view to concluding peace with the Allies. They were interviewed by the "Big Four", who gave them no satisfaction and finally hinted to them that they had better return to Turkey. Never has there been a more undignified proceeding. The Conference should never have allowed the Turks to come to Paris until they had made up their minds as to what the terms of the Turkish settlement should be. None of the "Big Four" had any idea what these should be, while our own Delegation could not make up their minds whether the Turks should be allowed to remain in Constantinople or not. Time has shown how easy it might then have been to

conclude a satisfactory treaty with Turkey and to have thus avoided the serious difficulties and risk of war with Turkey that occurred during the next four years.

When one reviews the hopes and aspirations with which the Conference was opened in Paris and its achievements during the first six months one cannot help being struck by the ignorance and ineptitude of the so-called "Big Four" who controlled the Conference in spite of their own Delegations. With the exception of Signor Orlando who, from ignorance of the English language, was inarticulate, not one of the three other Chief Delegates had the slightest knowledge of European politics or foreign affairs except, perhaps, M. Clemenceau, who at least knew what France desired. At the same time they were each and all of them so self-sufficient and puffed up with their own dictatorial position as the Masters of Europe that they flatly refused to listen to the advice of their own expert Delegations and, during those first six months of 1919, concluded two of the worst international treaties that have ever been framed. The Treaties of Versailles and of St. Germain both contained provisions which anybody with any knowledge of foreign politics or of European affairs would have realized as being opposed to every principle of national life and existence. In Central Europe, States were created which could not be self-supporting and economic barriers were raised which could not fail to strangle their development. Although many years have passed since the signature of these treaties, those parts of them which are contrary to the principle of national existence still cry out for rectification. For this situation the "Big Four" were entirely and solely responsible. During the three years following these events my mouth was closed as I was still a Government official, but in 1923 when I was no longer in the service of the Government I happened to sit next to Lloyd George at a public dinner. During the course of conversation he referred to the Treaty of Versailles and I allowed free rein to my pent-up feelings on the subject of this particular Treaty and told him frankly my opinion of it and his own heavy responsibility for some of its most regrettable features. He angrily asked me to what parts of the Treaty I referred. I at once gave him several examples of the unpractical nature of the Treaty. He said nothing for about ten minutes and then remarked in a friendly way, "If I had to go to Paris again I would conclude quite a different treaty."

My own opinion is that responsibility for the Treaty rests principally with Lloyd George. He was on very friendly terms with President Wilson,

upon whom he exerted and exercised great influence, while Clemenceau took but little interest in any other question than the weakening and humiliation of Germany. He knew that the French people, in spite of the defeat of Germany, were simply paralysed by the fear of Germany in the future and that they looked to him as Prime Minister and their Delegate to secure by treaty the reduction of Germany to a state of impotence. And from the French point of view Clemenceau was undoubtedly right.

What Lloyd George's aim may have been it is difficult to say. He was swayed from one side to the other according to the individuality of the person who flattered and made up to him. Whether it was Venezelos the Greek, or Benes the Czecho-Slovakian, whose influence was in the ascendant, Lloyd George would accept their views upon a question, which were of course always interested, rather than those of his own experts. If ever he consulted his own Delegation and their advice was not such as he desired, he would take and act upon the opinion of anybody whose views might coincide with his own, whether they really knew anything of the subject or not. Sometimes he did not even consult his own Foreign Secretary, Mr. Balfour, on the most weighty and important matters. For instance, I went one morning at the usual hour of 11 a.m. to see Mr. Balfour, and while discussing with him various matters connected with the work of the Delegation, Mr. Philip Kerr, Lloyd George's Private Secretary, entered the room. He handed Mr. Balfour a paper saying it was a draft Treaty of Guarantee by England and America of French territory in the event of German aggression. Mr. Balfour asked who had drawn it up and by whose orders. Kerr explained that Sir C. Hurst, the Legal Adviser of the Foreign Office, had been called up out of bed at midnight by Lloyd George and received his instructions to draft a Treaty of Guarantee. He had done so and the text of the Treaty had been already submitted to President Wilson and M. Clemenceau, both of whom had approved it. Mr. Balfour bounded out of his chair asking Kerr if he really meant to say that a Treaty of Guarantee had been drawn up and submitted to President Wilson and Clemenceau without consultation with any other member of the Cabinet and even without the knowledge of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a treaty which might involve the whole British Empire in a long and disastrous war! Kerr said that this was so and that Lloyd George had only sent the paper to Mr. Balfour to put the phraseology into proper shape. Mr. Balfour took the paper and was soon so engrossed

with its details that I left him feeling that his attention was already too fully occupied for other work. The sequel to that morning's incident was that at a plenary meeting of the Conference held at 3 p.m. that afternoon I actually saw the treaty in question receive the signatures of President Wilson, Lloyd George and Mr. Balfour. This is a very good instance of the methods of Lloyd George, who thought he could as Prime Minister do anything without consulting anybody and that he could not be wrong. It was immediately after this incident that a friend asked Clemenceau how he was getting on at the Conference. He replied, "Que voulez vous que je fasse ? Je m'y trouve entre Jésus Christ d'un côté et Napoléon Bonaparte de l'autre." As President of the Conference he sat between President Wilson and Lloyd George. The American Congress refused to ratify this Treaty, which therefore never came into force, but I learnt some years later from Lord Grey that he had been told by Senator Lodge that, if Mr. Wilson had asked Congress to ratify the Treaty without exacting at the same time approval of the proposed League of Nations, Congress would have ratified it. I have recounted this instance at some length as all its details were brought to my knowledge in so striking a manner, but I doubt if any treaty of such vital and far-reaching importance has ever been negotiated in such a thoughtless and light-hearted manner.

Lloyd George was quite the most dangerous representative it was possible to have. Still, unfitted as he was for the position he held in Paris, he always had a singular charm and was, when he chose, a most delightful and amusing companion.

During those six months in Paris the strain of work upon me had been very heavy and to this had been added the supervision of all the arrangements for the British Delegation in the Hotel Majestic and Hotel Astoria, a very worrying and thankless task. The result of this strain was insomnia and the doctors, fearing a breakdown, insisted on my immediate return to England and on my having a long spell of leave. I left Paris for England in the second week of July and saw no more of the Peace Conference. In other respects I enjoyed my stay in Paris, where I met many friends and many interesting personalities, besides having the opportunity of visiting the battlefields and making other minor excursions by motor-car round Paris, all of which I thoroughly enjoyed. My visit to the battlefields was unforgettable !

I remained on leave until the end of September, when I returned to my work at the Foreign Office. A disastrous blow awaited me shortly after

my return in the resignation of the Foreign Secretaryship by Mr. Balfour and the appointment of Lord Curzon in his place. During the eight years before and after I went to India that I had been Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, I had served under only two Foreign Secretaries, Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Balfour, two real statesmen, and at the same time the most able and charming men. It may be said that I had been spoiled by serving under two such ideal gentlemen. Perhaps that was so, but I had known Curzon too long to relish having to serve under him at the Foreign Office. Still, I remembered the fact that on my return from India it was only as war-work that I had consented at Sir E. Grey's request to resume my position at the Foreign Office, and I felt that, the treaties of peace terminating the war being practically concluded, I could, within a reasonably short space of time, divest myself of my post and retire into private life.

I had known Lord Curzon ever since my college days when I was an undergraduate at Trinity College, Cambridge, and Curzon, who was at Oxford, came and spent some of the Long Vacation in Trinity College. I had met him later in Egypt and elsewhere and came into official contact with him when he was Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office. During part of the period of his Viceroyalty I had been, as Assistant Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, entrusted with the control of Persian affairs, and in this way had established contact between the Foreign Office and India, a fact which he always placed to my credit. Owing to his hatred and mistrust of Russia, engendered by his residence in India at a moment when Russia was particularly aggressive, he was bitterly opposed to the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907 which I had taken a part in negotiating and concluding, and this was, I think, the first rift in the lute of our mutual relations. The rift became more serious in 1911 when at the Durbar in December of that year the King announced the reversal of the partition of Bengal and the removal of the capital of India from Calcutta to Delhi. It was unfortunate that in the preceding month of November the biography of Curzon and review of his administration written by Lovat Fraser was published, in which the partition of Bengal was described and lauded as Curzon's greatest administrative achievement during his Viceroyalty. This was a blow which Curzon never forgave, while a further injury was involved in the transfer of the capital to Delhi from his beloved Calcutta, where he had designed and commenced building the Victoria Memorial Hall, which was to be the greatest meeting-place of all the statesmen and

princes of India, and although nominally a memorial to Queen Victoria, a no less striking memorial to himself, as exemplified by his statue placed in front of the memorial and overshadowing all the statues of previous Viceroys situated on the great Maidan. The cup of bitterness was filled with resentment over this transfer, which I really believe, from what he wrote to me, he thought had been directed against him personally rather than for the good of India and its peoples. I am quite certain he never forgave me for this. I found him during my stay in India my implacable enemy in the House of Lords, and on my return he evidently thought he had me in his power in connection with the report of the Mesopotamian Commission. I have often discussed Curzon with our mutual friends and I have always maintained that in him there were embodied two entirely different personalities which showed themselves according to surrounding circumstances. The one was a delightful, amusing, clever and most charming companion, while the other was a hard and relentless man, and the more one saw of this side of him the more one almost hated him. It can therefore be well understood that to me the prospect of serving under Curzon as Secretary of State was not alluring. Happily our mutual position as ex-Viceroy gave me a position of equality apart from the difference in our official positions, whilst the knowledge of the absolute independence of my position served as a restraint upon him. Still, the situation was anything but comfortable.

President Wilson went back to America at the end of June to ascertain whether the American people would consent to the United States Government accepting a mandate from the League of Nations for Constantinople and the Straits. He very soon found after his return to America that the American people would accept neither the League of Nations, the President's own special creation, nor the proposed mandate.

In the meantime nobody bothered any more about the Treaties with Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey. The Delegations dispersed, Lloyd George and Balfour returned to England, and the remainder of the British Delegation remained under the leadership of Sir E. Crowe. When the refusal of the Americans of a mandate for Constantinople became known a proposal was considered for the internationalization of Constantinople and the Straits, which were still in the occupation of the Allies. But in the meantime the Turks were consolidating their position outside Constantinople in Anatolia and were gradually becoming a menace to the Allies. The French were strongly in favour of internationalization and hoped, by obtaining control

of the finances, to constitute themselves the guardians of Constantinople and the protectors of Turkey. In fact, they aspired to the position once occupied in Turkey and now vacated by Germany. In Smyrna and other parts of Asia Minor which the Greeks had been allowed to occupy, absolute chaos prevailed, for which Lloyd George, who was under the thumb of Venezelos, was more responsible than anybody.

In the month of December Clemenceau came to London, and "The Tiger" received a great ovation from the British public. During his stay a discussion took place over the policy of the Allies towards Russia and the Bolsheviks and it was finally decided to allow them to stew in their own juice. Although Winston Churchill had been very energetic in the support of Koltchak and Denekin in their hopeless struggle against the Bolsheviks, Lloyd George had always had a sneaking sympathy for the latter and the decision taken was in accord with his views.

After a certain amount of ineffectual haggling the German Government ratified the Treaty of Versailles on January 10th, 1920, creating a feeling of intense relief that this at last was the end of the Great War. Hard as they felt the terms to be, they realized that it was impossible for them to renew the war had they wished to do so, for although they had the man-power for an army, they had neither war materials nor money. In fact, they were far more knocked out than most people imagined. Although this was the first step to a situation of peace in Europe it did not at that time inspire much confidence, since so much depended upon whether Germany would loyally carry out the conditions of the Treaty. The League of Nations, embodied in the Treaty, was then inanimate, and it seemed problematical whether it could ever be galvanized into activity. It was recognized that it was the only possible basis of the peace treaty by which future wars might be avoided if its terms could be enforced, while it was self-evident then that most countries, and we in particular, would never again submit to the intolerable burden of huge armies and gigantic navies. It was difficult to see how the decisions of a League could be enforced without the backing of material force, since the manner in which treaties and conventions had been ignored during the war was still too fresh in the memories of those who had taken part in and suffered from it. That difficulty still remains, although the moral strength and influence of the League have enormously increased since then.

During the early part of 1920 the Allies took up the question of the Treaty with Turkey. In the month of January the British Government had

not made up their minds as to whether the Turks should be evicted or not from Constantinople. Montagu, Secretary of State for India, drew lurid pictures in the Cabinet of the results of Mussulman hostility in India if a policy of eviction were pursued, while the Chief of the Imperial General Staff made an official statement that an enormous army would be required in Constantinople if the Turks were evicted. These views created such a terrifying effect upon the Cabinet that it was decided that the Turks should be allowed to remain. Whether this was a wise decision is a matter of controversy, but in the new treaty which they actually submitted to the Turks, the proposal was made to surrender not only Smyrna but also Adrianople to the Greeks. The only excuse for such a proposal was the profound ignorance of those who made it, for anybody with knowledge of Turkey and experience of the Turks would have known that the Turks regard Adrianople with its sacred mosque as a place to which they attach the very highest importance, second only to Constantinople, nor was there any reason, historical or ethnographic, why Adrianople should be handed over to the Greeks. If Adrianople was not to be retained by Turkey, the only people who had any claim based on history or nationality were the Bulgarians, who, unfortunately for them, had been amongst the enemies of the Allies in the Great War. The Turks would very naturally refuse to consider such terms and the question arose who could or would in such circumstances force the Turks to accept. The whole scheme was in complete opposition to the considered views and advice of the Foreign Office, which were entirely ignored. The idea that Smyrna and Adrianople should both be handed over to the Greeks was grotesque, and was due solely to the fact that Lloyd George was entirely under the influence of Venezelos, almost the cleverest statesman in Europe. Greece was a bankrupt state and there was already an army of 90,000 Greeks around Smyrna which the Greek Government could neither support nor supply. When hostilities broke out later with the Turks it did not take long for the Turks to drive the Greeks into the sea.

During the many months of the Peace Conference, the question of the extradition of the ex-Kaiser for trial and of the punishment of those Germans who were known to have committed crimes during the war contrary to international and civilized law, was continually under discussion in the Allied delegations, and it was seriously thought possible to achieve both these aims. Various communications were made to the German Government in connection with the punishment of the war criminals, who ex-

pressed their readiness to undertake that they should be tried. A few trials were initiated at Leipzig and elsewhere, counsel was briefed and witnesses sent to Germany, but in the cases of conviction the sentences were so light and illusory that it was not thought worth while to pursue them further. On the other hand, the question of the extradition of the ex-Kaiser, who was residing in the château of Count Bentinck at Amerongen was developed and pursued. The idea was at one moment started of demanding his extradition to England and of his trial before an international tribunal in Westminster Hall ! It took some little time for the enthusiasts who pressed this idea to realize that such a tribunal could have no *locus standi* in England and still less in Westminster Hall, which was part of the Houses of Parliament. I had long discussions in Paris with Sir E. Pollock, the Solicitor-General (afterwards Lord Hanworth), and I argued that there could be no question of extradition since the ex-Kaiser had committed no extraditable offence, and that the Dutch would never under any circumstances extradite him to any Power or group of Powers. To do so it would be necessary to conclude a new treaty of extradition with Holland, with retro-active effect, which would be impossible and absurd. Still, this was not the view of either the Lord Chancellor (Lord Birkenhead) or the Solicitor-General. Lord Hanworth afterwards very generously told me how right I was in my arguments against the possibility of the ex-Kaiser's extradition.

In January of that year (1920) the Allied Powers addressed a formal demand to the Dutch Government for the extradition of the ex-Kaiser. The Allies met, as I and many others expected, with the flat refusal of the Dutch. On the 28th January I was sent for by the Lord Chancellor, who told me that it was the intention of the Allies to press the Dutch Government and to represent to them that the Allied Powers resented their attitude owing to the propinquity at Amerongen of the ex-Kaiser to the German frontier, thus creating a situation and focus of intrigue which the Allies would not tolerate. It was further proposed, he said, to threaten the Dutch as consequence of their refusal with a rupture of diplomatic relations and with a denial to Holland of their right to enter the League of Nations. The Prime Minister was however disposed to accept as an alternative the banishment of the ex-Kaiser to some distant land. He asked me how all this was to be achieved.

I told him that I had always regarded the extradition of the ex-Kaiser as quite impossible of attainment, but that if the Government would be satisfied with the banishment of the ex-Kaiser, their best course would be

to address the Dutch Government in strong terms as suggested, but that our Minister, Sir R. Graham, should endeavour to get the Dutch Foreign Minister to make the suggestion of banishment as an alternative to extradition. It was even suggested that the Falkland Islands should be the place of banishment. A further suggestion made was that the ex-Kaiser should be sent to a Dutch possession in the Atlantic or Indian Ocean. These proposals of banishment were not acceptable to the Dutch Government, mainly owing to the hardship it would undoubtedly impose on the ex-Empress, who was in a dangerous state of health and would be unable to withstand a change of climate. Nevertheless, the Prime Minister, Lloyd George, was very strong and active on the subject and instructed me to tell Sir R. Graham, our Minister at The Hague, to point out privately to the Dutch Foreign Minister that public opinion in England was deeply interested and demanded that the Kaiser should be tried and rendered incapable of again molesting the peace of the world. The British Government would not tolerate a blank refusal, and persistence in refusal would inevitably lead to a very strained situation and to the manifestation of a strong feeling against Holland in England. Of course I carried out my instructions, as Sir R. Graham carried out his, but all to no purpose, the Dutch Government being quite firm in their intention to pursue the natural course in such circumstances and to intern the ex-Kaiser in a safe position, which they did at Doorn on a property purchased by the Kaiser himself. The negotiations lasted about three months and then died a natural death. The whole question from the beginning was a hollow sham. Anybody with sense would have known that refusal of extradition by the Dutch was a foregone conclusion. Nevertheless, the Government lost a great deal of prestige in connection with this question, and that of the surrender and trial of the war criminals.

These and other failures of Lloyd George were not lost upon the country, and although public opinion was undoubtedly dissatisfied with Lloyd George and his Government, it was realized that there was nobody else capable of forming a Government at that moment.

It was about this time that the question of the Channel Tunnel was being thoroughly discussed by the Cabinet, the French Government and French public opinion being greatly in favour of its construction, there being a strong party in this country also to advocate it. Incidentally it fell to me to give the scheme a knock-out blow. The Cabinet asked for the views of the Foreign Office and Curzon asked me to have a memorandum prepared. Feeling that my very decided views might be considered

reactionary, I asked Sir Eyre Crowe to draw up a memorandum with his views as to the course to be pursued. He sent in a very long memorandum with all the "pros and cons" but without expressing any definite conclusion. When Curzon had read it he was dissatisfied with its lack of decision and asked me to write a memorandum, giving my personal views. This I did in a very few lines, expressing a very strong opinion against the proposal and pointing out the heavy responsibility of any Government which, by authorizing the building of a tunnel, diminished thereby the security enjoyed by this country owing to its insular position. As to the question of security having been transformed by the progress of aviation I maintained that the danger of invasion by a tunnel was thereby greatly increased, since it would become easier to seize the entrance to a tunnel by a *coup de main* carried out by soldiers landed in aeroplanes. The Cabinet accepted my view and the proposal was definitely turned down.

It was in July that two new appointments of Ambassadors were made by Curzon—Lord D'Abernon was sent to Berlin and Sir John Tilley to Rio de Janeiro.

D'Abernon, whom I had known since my first days as Attaché at Constantinople, was really a highly criticized appointment, although he afterwards did sufficiently well to justify it. His actions as President of the Ottoman Bank in Constantinople had been such as to have become a byword in financial circles. As a general rule a Permanent Under-Secretary of State is always consulted before an appointment as Ambassador is made, and in this instance I was not consulted, probably because my absolutely certain criticism was foreseen. I learnt afterwards that certain pressure had been exerted on Curzon and the appointment was promised.

Sir John Tilley's appointment was on quite different grounds. He was one of the Under-Secretaries at the Foreign Office and Curzon disliked him as he stood up to him and refused to be browbeaten. Nobody was so surprised as Tilley when the Embassy of Rio de Janeiro was offered to him, but he was an efficient official and a pleasant gentleman.

I was not at all sure that the Embassy at Paris was not offered to me by Curzon on the same grounds about a month later, although he could have got rid of me in six months' time, since in June I had warned him that, my work being no longer what I considered to be war-work, I proposed to resign and leave the service at the end of the year. Still, I must not deny to him a gracious act in offering me the Embassy in Paris, the highest post in the Diplomatic Service, and one that is greatly sought after.

I hesitated to accept it, not that I felt any doubts as to my being able to fulfil my political duties at that post to the satisfaction of the Government, but because, since my wife's death, I realized the difficulties of the social side of the Embassy and how impossible it is for an Ambassador really to do his social duty as such without an Ambassadress. My daughter Diamond was only 20 and too young to undertake the duties. In my doubt I consulted my sister-in-law, Lady Meux, who after full discussion suggested to me to accept the post, saying that if I felt the social side of the Embassy too burdensome I could always retire after two years without being thought to have accepted and relinquished a post after holding it for too brief a space of time. But one of the principal reasons that induced me to accept the offer of the Paris Embassy was the satisfaction it gave me to feel that Lloyd George and Curzon, who three years earlier had done their utmost to hound me out of the Diplomatic Service, had in the end been compelled by the force of circumstances to offer me the highest diplomatic post in the gift of the Government. It was suggested that I should go to Paris to take up my appointment at the end of September, but as Lord Derby kept on postponing the date of his leaving the Embassy it was finally decided that I should take up my post towards the end of November. I was, on the whole, glad to leave the Foreign Office where, not counting the period when I was in India, I had held the post of Permanent Under-Secretary with all its heavy responsibilities for just under ten years. During the war the work and the staff of the Foreign Office had increased so enormously that it was no longer possible to know individually every member of the Foreign Office and his work, as I used to know them during the six years I was there before going to India. Still, it was a wrench to separate oneself from friends with whom one had worked every day for some years.

CHAPTER XVII

PARIS, 1920 — 1922

DIAMOND and I arrived in Paris on the evening of November 27th, 1920, and were met by the Staff of the Embassy, the representative of the President and a few members of the British Colony. Numerous flashlight photographs were taken, but what appeared to have amused and interested the pressmen most was the fact that Diamond was carrying in her hand a small cage containing a canary, which was duly recorded in the Paris journals. The French Press contained many friendly articles on the subject of my appointment and arrival in Paris, reminding their readers of my former association with King Edward and with his initiative of the Entente. The Embassy was at that time in the hands of workmen since all the old chimneys were being pulled down and new ones built. It had been suggested to me that I should in the meantime stay at an hotel, but I came to the conclusion that it would be impossible to carry on satisfactorily the work of the Embassy from elsewhere and I preferred to put up with the temporary discomfort of moving from room to room as soon as each chimney was finished. The process lasted three months.

At this time Leygues was President of the Council and Minister for Foreign Affairs, a good-natured, blatant and not very clever man. His position was considered, and as time proved, insecure. He was friendly enough, but enjoyed little influence. This, however, suited Millerand, the President, since he was not satisfied with what were regarded the constitutional functions of the President, but wished to be in a position to intervene more actively in political affairs. The work of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs was carried on entirely by Berthelot, whom, in spite of his friendly professions, I always regarded as hostile to England. He was undoubtedly a man of very remarkable ability, and when nearly two years later he was removed by Poincaré from his position in consequence of doubtful transactions in connection with the Banque de Chine in which his reputation was involved, it was quite evident to me that France could not long dispense

with the services of such a very able and remarkable man, with a really unique knowledge of Foreign Affairs. After Poincaré had left the Quai d'Orsay his friend Briand restored him to his former position.

On the 1st of December I paid my official visit to the Élysée to present my letters of credence to the President. It took place with a considerable amount of ceremony as I was driven to the Élysée in a state barouche, with a squadron of cavalry as escort, and a guard of honour in the courtyard to salute me on arrival and departure. After the usual exchange of speeches with the President and presentations, we had a very friendly conversation together on political affairs, and at the end he told me that if I ever wished to see him, either privately or officially, on any matter in which he could be of use, he would be entirely at my disposition.

Two days later I took my seat at the Ambassadors' Conference. This conference had been appointed by the signatory powers of the Treaty of Versailles to carry out the provisions of the Treaty and to decide upon all questions that might arise therefrom. It consisted solely of representatives of the four Allied Great Powers and sat under the Presidency of Jules Cambon, ex-Ambassador in Berlin, and an old friend of mine. The conference was carried on in French, but what caused so much delay was the translation which had to be made into English, formerly for the benefit of Lord Derby and then for Wallace, the American Ambassador, owing to their ignorance of the French language.

Some two months before I left England Curzon asked me whom I would like to be appointed as Counsellor in Paris and I suggested Lindsay, an old friend, in whom I had great confidence and who had served with me previously when Ambassador in St. Petersburg. He was appointed, but within a fortnight of my arrival I heard from Curzon he was to be transferred to the Foreign Office. I protested, but to no purpose, and Cheetham was offered as substitute. I had to accept unwillingly and the selection proved a failure. Lady Cheetham was very different, very pretty and very capable. As Curzon surmised when Cheetham was appointed, she "would adorn and enliven our circle"! She did so.

I met Barthou at the club one day. He asked to be introduced to me and was very apologetic about his attack made in a speech on England and the Prime Minister. I told him that such attacks did no good, that they were resented and even strengthened the position of the person attacked. He said that his attacks were made in the interests of the Entente. I told him that I failed to see it, but we parted good friends. I saw a good deal

of Barthou later and he was generally helpful, but an opportunist and out for himself.

There was a good deal of trouble at this time owing to the indiscreet disclosures made by the French Government to the French Press. Curzon was perpetually at boiling-point on the subject and I had to make some quite unpleasant representations to Leygues and Berthelot. The former was quite unblushing in his denials of the truth. A typical example occurred in London when an article appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* containing full details of what had passed at a meeting of the Prime Ministers in Downing Street. The French Embassy denied that the indiscretion came from the French side, but Lord Burnham told Curzon that Professor Gerotwohl, his "Diplomatic Correspondent", had been to Leygues' hotel the previous day and had got the whole thing from Leygues himself, who had read out to him a paper drawn up by Curzon. Nevertheless, when the matter was brought up next day at the conference, Leygues, without turning a hair, said that he had not even seen a journalist and protested his complete innocence! Anyhow, my plain speaking to Leygues and Berthelot was productive of good in the end.

At this time the French were in a nervous and excited frame of mind over the questions of reparations and disarmament, coupled with the prospect of a financial crisis in the near future affecting their whole economic and commercial prosperity. They were suspicious of England and openly accused us of not supporting them and of lending a too-willing ear to German views. There was not a word of truth in this, but it exasperated Curzon, who never understood the psychology of the French. Just at the very moment when a meeting of the Supreme Conference was imminent, Leygues' Government fell on the question of the policy that the Government was to pursue, which he very properly refused to communicate in advance to the Chamber. Raoul Peret, the President of the Chamber, really brought about Leygues' fall. While thanking the Chamber for his re-election as President, he attacked the Government with such bitterness that on a vote of confidence Leygues was defeated by the largest majority by which any Government had fallen for many years. It was of interest to me that I dined at an official dinner given by Leygues in my honour on the very day of his downfall at which Peret and several Deputies who had voted against the Government were present. I saw Leygues and Peret having a very animated discussion in a corner of the drawing-room, both of them gesticulating freely. It was very awkward and seemed like a

funeral feast. I discussed the whole situation with Leygues and the other Deputies, and was astonished at the feeling with which some of them spoke against the Government.

Much wire-pulling took place in the choice of Leygues' successor, and it was very significant that Poincaré was not amongst those summoned to the Élysée to receive the offer to form a Government. Millerand disliked Poincaré and felt that with him as Prime Minister he would be more tied to his constitutional position. It was suggested to Peret to form a Government, but he failed to do so since he wished to bring in Briand and Poincaré and the latter insisted on having the portfolio of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs or nothing. Everybody realized that the presence of Poincaré at the Quai d'Orsay would have been disastrous at that moment. Eventually the offer was made to Briand, who succeeded in forming a Government and was thus Prime Minister for the sixth time, having held office as such five times in nine years. Personally I was very pleased at his appointment, as I found him always most friendly, conciliatory and anxious to improve Anglo-French relations. At the same time he was always cheerful and amusing, but very lazy, and it was almost impossible to get him to read anything.

I heard it was said that we had prevented Poincaré's appointment, but there was not a word of truth in this and I received authority to deny this rumour officially. The origin of this story was that three months previously, at the moment of Leygues' appointment as Prime Minister, Lloyd George had seen Albert Thomas and had held up his hands in a depreciatory manner, saying, "So you have Leygues." Thomas replied, "It will only be for two months." Lloyd George then said: "Tell Millerand that at the end of two months when Leygues falls, we do not want Poincaré." It appeared that Thomas spread this story, but however unwise it may have been to make such a remark, it was even criminal to repeat it.

At a Diplomatic Dinner given about this time by Peret, the President of the Chamber, at which I was present, an unpleasant incident occurred when the new German Ambassador asked the Chief of the Protocol to present him to the American Ambassador, Mr. Wallace. The latter refused point blank to be introduced on the plea that America was still at war with Germany. What made matters worse was the fact that Mrs. Wallace was placed next to the German Ambassador at table. She turned her back on him the whole time.

After dinner on that occasion I was introduced to a French General

who had commanded at Soissons. He told me that he had had a Scottish Brigade under his command which lost very heavily in the defence of a position near Soissons, more than half its effectives being sacrificed, but the position being held. Since then his division had erected on the position held a monument to the Scotsmen who fell, with the following charming inscription in English: "Here the Scottish thistle will ever be tended and flourish among the roses of France." This was a very pleasing instance of gratitude, a quality I very rarely encountered amongst the French, for the part played and sacrifices made by Britain in the Great War.

An act on the part of the City of London was much appreciated at this time. It was the adoption of Verdun by the City of London. Millerand, the President, expressed to me his warm satisfaction. I could not help feeling that it must be for favours to come.

It was towards the end of January 1921 that, to my surprise, I received a visit from Lord Northcliffe. I had an interesting talk with him and asked him if the rumour was true that he was going to pay a visit to the Kaiser at Doorn. I remarked that his visit would be sure to be known and would probably create a bad impression both in England and France. He replied that he did not care, and added that he had a list of two hundred questions that he was going to put to the Kaiser. I felt that I almost pitied the Kaiser. He was extremely agreeable and evidently out to be so, for on taking leave of me he made the following remark which startled me: "You may always count on me as your friend!" Since Northcliffe had attacked me violently in all his papers on every occasion for at least ten years it would have entailed a complete change of front on his part. The visit to Doorn did not take place.

At a luncheon party at Stanislas de Castellane's house where there were many Deputies, all opponents of Clemenceau, there was an interesting discussion showing their admiration for him. It was said that he had sent a telegram to Paris from India, where he was travelling, in the following terms: "*Je suis parmi les tigres, mais c'est moi qui porte le fusil.*" So like him! The Deputies thought that his career was not finished and that some day in a great emergency he would, in spite of his age, reappear like a comet on the horizon.

Almost immediately after the formation of Briand's Government, a Conference of the Allied Powers was held in Paris which lasted several days and was attended by Lloyd George and Curzon. The question of German reparations was the chief matter under discussion and Lloyd George

was very hostile to French views. I had to point out to him that it was essential for Briand to achieve some success, however small, and that otherwise his tenure of office would be short, since Poincaré and his party were lying low and waiting to attack him if the results of the Conference appeared unsatisfactory. Finally Briand did achieve a small success, throwing dust into the eyes of the French people. At the conclusion of the Conference I was very pleased to see Lloyd George and his circus off by train on their return to London.

Much attention at this time was paid to a visit to Paris by Marshal Pilsudski, President of the Polish Republic. Opinion in London was reassured by Briand's statement to me that the only decisions taken were the measures to be adopted in the event of a Bolshevik attack, and the possibility of a commercial agreement discussed. Briand regarded the Marshal as a man of very ordinary ability, whilst Berthelot told me that he had a very furtive expression and seemed to be always expecting something unpleasant to happen to him.

I went to London for a short while on February 8th to be present at Alec's wedding. I saw many interesting people and had an interview with the King. He told me that he differed from Lloyd George and liked Poincaré, with whom he had always got on well when in Paris, and also when Poincaré came to London. I told the King that I thought it would pay us to be on the most friendly terms with Poincaré and that therefore I hoped His Majesty would do everything in his power to propitiate him when he came to London for the Verdun fête. This the King promised to do.

About this time I received a message from Poincaré through his intimate friend Bardoux to the effect that if Poincaré came into office he would be friendly to us and the Entente. I replied that I had never thought otherwise.

Towards the end of February there was a further conference of Allied Great Powers in London which created the worst possible impression in Paris since there was nothing but bickering between Lloyd George and Briand. Lloyd George was hopeless with foreigners, but imagined that he was tactful and understood them. The result of the Conference was that the French, in their exasperation with the Germans and the lack of support from us,¹ decided to occupy Dusseldorf and two other German towns in

¹ I have since learnt on indisputable authority that, after a private conversation with Briand, Lloyd George swung round and accepted the proposal for the occupation.

order to bring the Germans to their knees. In the end they were right, though we did not think so then.

At Easter-time Diamond and I made a wonderful trip by car to Madrid and back in a week. We arrived at noon one day at Madrid, saw the wonderful pictures in the Prado Gallery and visited the Palace that afternoon. We left for Paris the next morning at 6 a.m. That was a very tiring day, as we reached St. Jean de Luz at 11 p.m., having dined at San Sebastian.

In April public attention was fixed in England and Europe on the strike of the coal-miners which assumed serious proportions owing to the suicidal policy pursued of flooding and destroying mines. To meet the situation Sir H. Wilson, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, decided on the necessity of withdrawing the British troops from Silesia and partly from Cologne, in order to concentrate them and to preserve law and order in England. The policy was undoubtedly right, but I had to explain it to the French Government who, rather unexpectedly, made no objection whatever. Briand made scathing remarks to me as to the cause of strikes in England, attributing them entirely to Lloyd George coquetting with Bolshevism and revolution.

The French Government were greatly excited as to what steps should be taken in the event of the Germans not paying up the 12 milliards they had agreed to pay on the 1st May. There was a meeting at Lympe between Lloyd George and Briand to discuss the question, the French wanting to advance at once into the Ruhr. Lloyd George objected, wishing to issue in the first instance an ultimatum before any action was taken, and this created much friction between him and Briand. The French in the end accepted the proposal of an ultimatum to Germany, but hoped that nothing would come of it so that they might carry out their plan of invading the Ruhr. What they really wanted was the coal. Nevertheless, they called up the 1919 class of recruits. They were disappointed, for in a week's time the Germans accepted the ultimatum and carried out their engagements.

Another question which provoked a great deal of friction between England and France in the early summer months of 1921 was that of Upper Silesia. The points at issue were the manner in which the plebiscite provided by the Treaty should take place and the necessary steps to ensure that it should be fairly and properly taken. The French did their utmost by every conceivable trick to prepare the ground so that the whole of the industrial area should fall to Poland. With this aim in view they encouraged Polish revolutionaries, under a leader named Korfanty, to wreck mines and foundries which were undoubtedly German property. This annoyed Lloyd

George, who consequently worked on the other tack. At the same time the French were in an irritable condition owing to the failure of their scheme to invade the Ruhr, which they attributed entirely to us. I had to make very strong representations to the French Government as to their attitude in Upper Silesia which were anything but palatable to them.

At Whitsuntide I went to England for a few days and had long conversations with Curzon at Hackwood. Eventually I received a message from Lloyd George to return to Paris as he was nervous about the French. On my return I impressed on Briand the absolute necessity of putting an end to the polemics between London and Paris which were serving the purpose of those who wished to see the destruction of the Entente. In consequence he made quite a friendly speech in the Chamber, and there was a *détente* for some weeks as regarded Silesian affairs.

To my surprise a fortnight later the President asked me to come and see him privately. He talked to me about the Silesian question and I was very frank with him as to French action there, and urged him to change the French High Commissioner as we had changed ours. He was very friendly but the interview had no result.

Curzon came on the 18th June for three days to discuss the Turco-Greek and Silesian questions with Briand. He asked me to be present to help, and after three days' conference he thanked me for my assistance, which was unusual for him, and returned to London. I was not sorry to see him go as he was a very uncomfortable guest, always half an hour late at least for every meal and very upsetting to all arrangements in the house. On one occasion in the middle of the night he threw a log of wood through a pane of the window of his bedroom, to the great fright of the watchman in the garden. Curzon never mentioned the fact to me and I have never been able to find any explanation.

I had a large party in the Embassy for the Grand Prix, including Mr. Watson, the owner of Lemonora, who won the big race. Naturally the win excited no enthusiasm in Paris.

On the 4th July I went home on a month's leave. It was on the 27th July; I was sleeping in my garden at Oakfield on a very hot day when I was roused by the butler who said Curzon was on the telephone. He told me that the French Ambassador had presented a most disagreeable note about Silesia, that the situation had in consequence become extremely grave, a rupture with France being possible at any moment, and that I was to come to London by car at once and to start back to Paris next morning.

I had guests staying with me and had to break up my party and go to London. I saw Curzon and heard all he had to say. I told him that I did not regard the situation as serious as he did, and expressed my conviction that the question could be settled in a day or two. So confident was I that I asked to return in four days' time if I had settled the matter satisfactorily. He ridiculed the request and me for making it, saying that such a prospect was out of the question.

I left for Paris next day and on arrival heard all the news which was described to me in very gloomy colours. I grasped at once that what was really needed was some means to save the face of the French Government who were trying to do the same thing *vis-à-vis* of the Germans by truculence. On the following morning I went to see Briand with a note in my pocket that I had drawn up containing a formula by which representations of a very anodyne nature were to be made to the German Government and that if this were done a Conference should be convened at once and that no movement of troops should take place until the Conference had decided the whole question. After a long discussion Briand approved my formula, and I suggested that he should make it his own proposal to which he agreed, since I felt that it would, as such, be more acceptable to the French Government. He promised the reply of the Council of Ministers in the afternoon, and I heard that evening from him that it had been unanimously accepted. In this way I succeeded in obtaining everything that Curzon wanted, giving nothing in return except a joint communication of a very mild character to be made in Berlin. But the face of the French Government was saved. The question was whether Curzon would accept my solution. Unfortunately telegraphic and telephonic communications were interrupted by a storm which raged continuously. Happily I had sent copies of my formula by messenger, and by noon of the following day I received a very warm and enthusiastic telegram from Curzon entirely approving what I had done. I informed Briand; the crisis was over and I returned to London on Sunday, having left it only on the previous Thursday! Curzon was genuinely surprised at my success and could not understand how I had achieved it.

On the 8th August Lloyd George and Curzon both came to Paris for a Conference. They arrived in a combative mood, especially the former. Things went very badly, English and French views proving quite irreconcilable though every effort was made to find a compromise. Finally at the eleventh hour the solution proposed by Lloyd George of referring the whole

question of Upper Silesia to the League of Nations was accepted with enthusiasm by Briand.

During the week that Lloyd George and Curzon spent in Paris I was struck by the frequency with which they used the phrase "rupture with the French". The idea seemed to be perfectly familiar to them and to present no drawback from our point of view. I asked Lloyd George at dinner one night, and Curzon afterwards, what they considered a rupture with the French would imply. Both answered that they did not know. When I suggested to Lloyd George that it might mean the withdrawal of our troops from Silesia and the Rhine he replied at once, "Not at all, there is no reason why they should withdraw." When I asked, "Then what does a rupture mean?" he answered, "I cannot say." This only shows the levity with which these two statesmen talked of a rupture with France, which must have had the gravest consequences and might have meant the collapse of an edifice which it had taken twenty years to build up and upon which the peace of Europe was based. I was very unfavourably impressed by their lack of imagination on such a very vital question. When Lloyd George left for London he expressed his thanks and gratitude for the help I had given him and he repeated to me several times that I had been most helpful. Curzon, also, in saying good-bye, said how fortunate the Government were in having me as Ambassador as they regarded me as a strong element of stability and able to exercise control over the French. Personally I thought this view exaggerated, but it was meant well. I was very pleased to see Curzon depart as his pomposity and unpunctuality were to me a constant source of irritation. A week of Curzon and Lloyd George had quite tired me out.

In August I made a delightful trip in my car with Gascoigne through the devastated regions to Verdun, where we were shown all the positions of interest in the fighting round it, and from there we went on to Coblenz, where we stayed for some days with the British High Commissioner and saw a great deal of the American troops stationed there. It was interesting to see from many miles distant the American Stars and Stripes floating over the famous fort of Ehrenbreitstein. I was greatly struck by the extraordinary prosperity and flourishing trade that I saw everywhere in the German-occupied territories, a great contrast to the situation in the devastated regions and Belgium. In these territories all the factories were working at full blast, the children were very clean and well fed and the villages spick and span with well-painted doors and window-frames. From

Coblenz I went to Cologne, where I was received officially by General Morland in command of the British garrison, the 14th Hussars whom I had known in India being my escort. I inspected the garrison, consisting of cavalry and artillery, in the square of the Cathedral, the troops marching past before an enormous German crowd, who seemed very interested in the proceedings. For me it was the greatest pleasure to review these troops, and I felt so proud of them as they and their horses were simply magnificent. I knew Cologne well, having often been there in past years, and in my wildest dreams I could never have conceived the possibility of standing there in the Cathedral Square and taking the salute from a British force marching past me in that most German of German towns. From Cologne I returned to Paris, traversing the whole of Belgium, passing down the lovely valley of the Meuse and crossing the Ardennes. At Namur, when I stopped for lunch, I was given some excellent burgundy which had been sunk in the river during the four years of the German occupation.

It fell constantly to my lot to make disagreeable representations to Briand who, I must say, received them like a lamb. I had to make a strong protest to him on the publication in the Press by Poincaré of a confidential letter addressed by Lloyd George to Clemenceau, of which he had had a copy when President of the Republic. He told me an amusing story of the conflict between Clemenceau and Poincaré. A statue had been erected to Clemenceau in his birthplace while none had been raised to Poincaré. The latter could not grasp that the statue to Clemenceau had been erected during his lifetime because he was thought to be politically and practically dead. Briand had himself refused to allow his own statue to be erected because he did not wish to be thought dead. Clemenceau had evidently recognized this point of view, for in order to show that he was not dead he intended to assist in person at the inauguration of his own statue. Finally, when he said good-bye to me at the door he held my hand and made quite a long speech to me. The pith of it was this. Everybody, he said, knew that, in the difficult moments there had been between the British and French Governments, I had oiled the wheels and exercised all my influence for peace without sacrificing by a hair's breadth the interests of my Government. The French Government appreciated and were grateful, and admired me for it. He went on for a long time in this strain and made me feel quite uncomfortable. When he stopped, I chipped in and told him that, after all, I had only done my duty in trying my best to maintain friendly relations between England and France. To this he at once replied, "In that con-

spiracy you may always count upon me as your accomplice." That concluding sentence pleased me.

During the autumn I was invited to many shooting parties at Ermenonville, Breteuil, Voisins, the Presidential shoot at Rambouillet and elsewhere, all of which I thoroughly enjoyed and had capital sport. The partridge-shooting round Paris is quite exceptionally good, while at Count Fels' place at Voisins they had very high pheasants. Everybody was most hospitable to me and I really enjoyed the social side of Paris, though the strain was heavy and grew more heavy as the weeks went by.

In October I went home on a fortnight's leave, and as usual when I had been only a few days at home I received a message from Curzon to the effect that he wished me to return at once for the Ambassadors' Conference. I was annoyed and told him that it was really the limit that I should be sent back from leave three times in six months, and that there was no necessity for it since there would be no Conference until I returned. I remained and went back as I had originally arranged.

A dastardly attempt was made on Herrick, the American Ambassador, by a Communist who sent him a bomb in a parcel. Happily it was opened by his servant who, seeing what it was, threw it into another room where it exploded, causing fearful destruction. The servant was slightly wounded. The sender of the bomb was not discovered.

A tiresome episode occurred in the escape of the ex-Emperor Karl of Austria in an aeroplane from Switzerland to Bergenland in Hungary, where a mixed Commission of Delimitation was operating. Under instructions I advocated drastic action in demanding his immediate arrest, and that in the event of refusal or inaction, the minor Powers should not be restrained from action against Hungary. The French Government desired that the Hungarian Government should declare the forfeiture of his crown. They further suggested that a strong reproach should be addressed to the Swiss Government for their negligence in allowing his escape. This I succeeded in preventing. This event was the beginning of long negotiations as to the future residence of the ex-Emperor. It was finally decided that he should be placed on board a British gunboat at Budapesth and taken to Galatz, where he would be transferred to the cruiser *Cardiff*, and that the Portuguese Government should allow him to go to Madeira. These plans were carried out, and the ex-Emperor and his family went to Madeira, where he died not long after. It was a tragic and not very pleasant business.

Strange as it may seem, there was a very strong Press campaign in France against England at this time, but the campaign was before long diverted to Italy when they heard of the sacking of the French Consulate at Turin and other anti-French incidents at Naples, provoked by words used by Briand at the Disarmament Conference in Washington derogatory to the Italian Army. His statements were published in the *Daily Telegraph* and this journal was in consequence the focus of bitter attacks as having fomented these Franco-Italian troubles. I ascertained, however, the interesting fact that it was "Pertinax", the Editor of the *Echo de Paris*, who was acting at Washington as special correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, and who had reported Briand's language in one of his telegrams to that paper. Curzon remonstrated with Burnham for this "unpardonable mistake" and Pertinax was ordered by his Government to leave Washington.

Unfortunately the relations of the British Government with the English Press were strained, since the Northcliffe Press was boycotted by Lloyd George and the Government could not therefore utilize its services. There was also a good deal of backstairs intrigue going on in the ranks of the Government, which was encouraged by the Beaverbrook Press.

On the anniversary of the Armistice Day I unveiled a memorial in the Church of the Rue d'Aguesseau to forty-three British soldiers who had fallen in the war. The church was packed and the French Government sent a representative.

At this time French public opinion was much excited over the case of Landru, who had successfully done away with several wives (I forget how many) by burning their bodies after killing them and had finally been discovered, tried and eventually guillotined. He appears to have been an extraordinary charmer, for his actual wife at the time of his trial was devoted to him, although undoubtedly had he lived she would have shared the fate of the others. I was at a luncheon given to Rudyard Kipling and Sir James Frazer at which the poetess Comtesse de Noailles was also present. Landru was discussed and she became very excited and shouted across the table, "I know he killed, but if I were on the jury I would acquit him because he knows how to love!" This very French but unconvincing sentiment was received with much applause.

It was in December that I received a long despatch from Curzon recounting a conversation with St. Aulaire, the French Ambassador, in which the latter had proposed a defensive alliance with France. When I mentioned this to Briand he opened his eyes with astonishment, saying that St. Aulaire

had no authority and must have acted off his own bat, but that he welcomed the idea and could not throw cold water on St. Aulaire's enthusiasm.

The idea however sank in, for Briand went for a few days to London and pressed there the scheme for an Anglo-French Alliance. The idea was rather to help France out of her difficulties than any scheme of sound policy. On his return to Paris he was full of the scheme, which he said had been discussed with Lloyd George and which had been favourably received by Curzon. This was not borne out in a letter I received from Curzon. Briand spoke to me about it and urged the formation of a wide European *entente*, adding that France as the greatest Military Power in Europe, and England the greatest Naval Power, would together constitute *le bras séculaire* of the League of Nations and maintain peace in Europe. Such a step, he said, would make an effective body of the League of Nations. I told him I could not agree with this view, and that his proposal reminded me of the language of the Kaiser who, in 1908, had used almost identical language to me in which Germany was to hold the position he now desired to attribute to France in Europe. I was not opposed to the idea of a guarantee to France in case of invasion by Germany since this would give us a position of greater strength and influence in France, entitling us up to a certain point to control the French attitude and actions, especially since, in the event of hostile attack on France, we would certainly, in our own interests, have again to come to the assistance of France. But I was very strongly opposed to any definite alliance with France as I mistrusted all French Governments, and especially Briand's, as being extremely imperialistic in their aims. An alliance, even apart from these disadvantages, might involve us in still worse complications, such as the defence of Poland or Czecho-Slovakia.

Two days after this conversation Lloyd George passed through Paris on his way to the Riviera and I was present and acted as interpreter in a long conversation between Lloyd George and Briand on the subject of Briand's proposal for an alliance. Lloyd George seemed opposed to the idea but was ready to give a guarantee to France in case of invasion. He said he was quite certain he could overcome any opposition in the House of Commons. The matter was adjourned for further discussion until the proposed meeting of the two Prime Ministers at Cannes in the first week of January.

I was rather amused at the accommodation required by Lloyd George when he travelled. It was far more luxurious than that in which King

LUNCH WITH THE KING

Edward travelled on the various continental journeys on which I accompanied him. It amused me too to see that he had some ladies with him, but who they were heaven only knows !

It was then that I heard that, owing to the scandal connected with the Bank of Indo-China, Berthelot had resigned his post at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. I was not sorry as I regarded him as very hostile to England.

In the middle of December I went over to London for five days at a moment of considerable interest owing to the discussion in the House of Lords and the House of Commons of the Irish Treaty which had just been concluded. The Ulster people were foolishly saying that they had been betrayed. Though the Treaty was not particularly good, it might easily have been worse.

The King asked me to a *tête-à-tête* luncheon at Buckingham Palace that lasted nearly two hours. He told me that he was being greatly attacked over the Irish question for his conciliatory attitude and that he received quantities of anonymous letters with all sorts of menaces. He expressed himself as pleased with what Balfour had achieved at the Washington Conference, and told me that the reason why the Americans were ready to scrap all their ships was because they were actually built according to plans got from the Admiralty which they had tried to improve upon but which they now realized to be absolutely useless, the ships being insufficiently armoured on the deck and below the water-line. He complained about some of the diplomatic appointments, but I was able to say truly that I was no longer in any way responsible for them.

I saw Curzon also. He told me the situation between him and Lloyd George was becoming more difficult every day, because the latter constantly took action in foreign affairs and said nothing about it to him. He said there was a big scheme for the development of Russia and the recognition of the Soviets in which the services of a person in the city named Sir R. Dunn were involved.

It was just before Christmas that I dined with Maurice Rothschild, a number of Deputies being present, some of whom spoke with the utmost freedom. I was much interested to hear one of them declaiming against the policy of France, or rather, the absence of any policy. He stated that he had been in Germany, that the English were greatly respected, the Italians liked, and the French hated. The explanation of this he declared to be that France, instead of being conciliatory to Germany like the other

Powers, pursued a policy of pinpricks which irritated the Germans beyond measure because they realized that they were too weak to retaliate. The other Deputies said nothing, for I think they realized it was true.

When Curzon passed through Paris on his way to join the Conference of Premiers at Cannes I gave him in writing my views on the proposed Anglo-French Alliance. I advised that we should give nothing to them in the way of an alliance unless they changed entirely their attitude which had of late been decidedly hostile, especially on the questions of Morocco and of submarines, at the Conference on disarmament in Washington. I felt particularly strong on the latter point, for the French attitude at Washington was in favour of the reduction of capital ships, while more than hostile to any limit being imposed upon the numbers of submarines, and as they knew, and some even admitted, that England was the only Power against whom these submarines could be of any use.

The Conference of Prime Ministers at Cannes held at the opening of the New Year with a view to arriving at some agreement on the subject of reparations proved a complete failure, and as they could not come to terms it was decided to invite the German Government to send representatives there in order that the question might be discussed from the German point of view.

In the meantime Briand was being bitterly attacked in Parliament in connection with his proceedings at Cannes, amongst them being his taking lessons in golf from Lloyd George, so much so that he felt it necessary to return to Paris to refute the accusations made in the Chamber against him. When he met the attack from the Deputies he made a magnificent speech, at the close of which he was vociferously applauded on every side, and then to the surprise of everybody he suddenly announced his resignation and left the Chamber. All those who had attacked him begged him with tears in their eyes to remain in office, but he was adamant in his refusal, stating that to remain in office would necessitate his spending at least three days in answering interpellations in the Chamber which would be inconsistent with the continuation of the sittings of the Supreme Council at Cannes. He decided that resignation was his only course. It was however obvious that this was not the true cause of his resignation, since the absence of the Prime Minister of France naturally brought the Conference to a close. He was succeeded by Poincaré, who formed his Government without delay.

Lloyd George and Curzon returned at once from Cannes and I arranged

that Lloyd George should meet Poincaré at the Embassy on the 14th January. On the way from the Gare de Lyon to the Embassy, Lloyd George asked my opinion as to whether he should offer a Pact to Poincaré, i.e. a guarantee of assistance in the event of aggression. I hesitated, but Lloyd George had evidently made up his mind to do so. The interview took place in my study and lasted two hours, during which I acted as interpreter. The offer of a Pact by Lloyd George produced quite a heated argument. In the event of Poincaré accepting the proposed Pact he wished it to be accompanied by a Military Convention in which would be stipulated the exact number of troops we could send to France and the precise dates on which they would land. Lloyd George, on the other hand, pointed out that at that time we could probably only make a paper promise to send 100,000 men to France, but that he would be ready to give a firm guarantee that we would support France "with all our force" and that, having in store all the necessary equipment, we would shortly after the outbreak of war be able to send to France nearly a million men. Poincaré would not listen to reason and insisted on a Convention with the Pact and went so far as to say, "Je préfère une Convention sans pacte à un pacte sans Convention." Lloyd George was quite firm and told Poincaré he could "take it or leave it", but that he should be careful what he was about. I must say that Lloyd George acted with great dignity and firmness under provocation and impressed me most favourably, while Poincaré made a very unfavourable impression both on Lloyd George and me, as a man of narrow views and with a mind entirely absorbed in detail. If the conversations had been published, how angry the French people would have been with Poincaré!

A few days later I accompanied Curzon to an interview with Poincaré. This was the beginning of the bitter animosity that sprung up and pervaded the relations between these two statesmen which reacted to the mutual disadvantage of their two countries. I warned Curzon that this interview would probably be unsatisfactory, but he was not prepared to realize how very unsatisfactory it proved in the end. Both of them were on their toes the whole time, and Poincaré in the end said that he was in no hurry to sign the proposed Pact, and that the Moroccan, Eastern and other questions must all be out of the way before any negotiations on the Pact could be resumed. One really would have thought from Poincaré's attitude that the Pact was to be of great advantage to us, while the advantage was entirely on the French side. We offered the French something

definite and asked for nothing in return. I advised Curzon to let the matter drop until the French should come on their knees to beg for it. It was of interest that, two months after the unconditional offer of the Pact to Poincaré, when he realized how necessary it was for him to have it, we then imposed the condition of a satisfactory settlement of the Moroccan and other questions, so that his refusal of Lloyd George's offer came back to him as a boomerang. When he reopened the question to me I warned him that under any circumstances it would be useless to expect that England would intervene in the event of an attack upon Poland, a statement that disconcerted him greatly.

Apropos the proposed Pact I attended a dinner at the British Chamber of Commerce on the 28th January and made the usual ambassadorial speech. A French Deputy named Faure made one of a claptrap order urging the close alliance of England and France who, united, could govern the world. I was amused at a speech in reply by Sir Albert Hudson, an invalid, who had to speak from his chair, asking what was the good of an alliance. Could they not trust the word of Great Britain in the future as in the past? Great Britain, who had entered into the war with all her forces and had poured millions of men into France? He thought the French misunderstood the situation, implying that the advantage of an alliance would be purely on the French side. A practical and very true summary.

I lent the Embassy to Princess Mary and Lascelles, who passed through Paris on March 9th on their honeymoon and on their way to Florence, I having left in the morning for Biarritz, where I was to unveil a statue to King Edward. Diamond and Chichester went with me in my car. We stayed the first night at Tours and then went to Biarritz, a run of 330 miles. The unveiling ceremony went off successfully; I made a long speech in French which was greatly appreciated. We then went in procession through the town to the War Memorial, and as I had heard that the Minister of Marine was going to lay a wreath on the memorial, I ordered one twice as large with the British colours and an inscription to the effect that it was a token of the respect and admiration of Great Britain. It was so unexpected that they were very much touched by it. Afterwards there was a tremendous banquet of three hundred with long speeches followed by a gala performance at the theatre and then fireworks and illumination of the coast with bonfires and Bengal lights. We got away at 1 a.m. and had to get up at 5 a.m. in order to reach Montpelier

the same day, a distance of 350 miles. The following day we went to Monte Carlo. While there I was greatly annoyed at receiving a telegram from Curzon summoning me back to Paris as he wanted to consult me ! I replied that I would do as he wished, but that it was the fourth time within one year that I had been recalled prematurely from leave. I had to give up my projected visit to Rome. We had rather a terrible journey home in the snow between Nîmes and Vichy, taking thirteen hours to do 200 miles.

On my arrival in Paris I went to see Curzon at the Ritz and talked to him for about a quarter of an hour, but there was no question of asking my advice.

I lunched with the President the same day and told both him and Poincaré that if the Turks refused to accept the proposals of the Powers and provoked a renewal of the war with Greece, it was perfectly certain that the Greeks would evacuate Asia Minor, concentrate in Thrace, and we might one day wake up to find them in Constantinople. Millerand asked if this were possible, and I told him that it was not my opinion but that of our military authorities. This impressed Millerand very much, but not Poincaré, who threw doubts on it.

During these months discussions were in progress relating to the proposed Near East Conference to make a Treaty of Peace with Turkey and for an Economic Conference at Genoa. The latter was a conception of the brain of Lloyd George with a view to the rehabilitation of both Germany and Russia in the councils of Europe. The difficulty in connection with the conference was that Lloyd George wished the Soviets to take part and that they should obtain official recognition under certain conditions, while the French demanded that the conditions should be fulfilled before recognition was granted. On the 8th April I met Lloyd George in the train on his way to Genoa and we had a long discussion with Poincaré and Barthou in his railway carriage. The former was extremely disagreeable and was evidently out to break up the conference. Lloyd George handled him very well and told him how unpopular the French had become with the lower classes in England, and even said that if he and Barthou returned with empty hands it might be the end of the Entente. Poincaré was frightened, changed his tone and promised to make no more difficulties and to do what he could to help and co-operate at Genoa. It is only necessary to add here that the Genoa Conference proved a complete fiasco, the only development being the Russo-German Treaty of Rapallo, which

with a view to arriving at some agreement upon which negotiations for a peace treaty with Turkey could be based. With this object in view Curzon came over to Paris for some days and stayed with me at the Embassy. When the Conference met at the Quai d'Orsay Poincaré insisted on the Italian Ambassador being invited to be present with the hope of being two to one against Curzon, and the latter reluctantly assented. The first two meetings passed off fairly well in spite of Curzon's very aggressive attitude and his repeated reproaches to Poincaré of the desertion of the French troops at Chanak, at which I could see that Poincaré was fairly exasperated. Before the third meeting I warned Curzon that there must be no further mention of Chanak, otherwise no progress would be made, and he promised not to refer again to that incident. Unfortunately he did not keep his promise and the result was a most deplorable episode.

In the course of a long and rambling speech Curzon commented once more on the abandonment by the French Government of their British ally at Chanak. This provoked the wrath of Poincaré and he suddenly lost his temper and shouted and screamed at Curzon, really in the most insulting manner, pouring out torrents of abuse and making the wildest statements with a flow of language like Niagara, which completely bowled over Curzon, who collapsed entirely. Curzon kept on saying to me, "What am I to do, hadn't I better go home to London, I cannot go on, something must be done!" I thereupon took upon myself to interrupt Poincaré, saying that Curzon was not feeling well and that the Conference must be adjourned. Poincaré accepted and Curzon left the room with the rest of us. I thought it better to leave both Curzon and Poincaré to cool down a bit, but I realized at once that if the Conference was to continue at all, it devolved upon me to act as peacemaker. After about a quarter of an hour I went to see Curzon and found him stretched out on a chair, deeply distressed and trying to revive his spirits. He said, "I must go home, I cannot stand this any longer. He has insulted me and if he does not apologize I must go home." I told him that before it would be possible to obtain an apology from Poincaré it was absolutely essential that he should withdraw his statement of the abandonment by the French Government of their ally at Chanak. He at first refused, saying that it was absolutely true. To that I agreed, remarking that it was not always advisable to state things even if they were true, and that it would be useless to hope to extract an apology from Poincaré unless I had something to

offer which, in my opinion, must be the withdrawal of that phrase. Finally he consented.

I then went off to see Poincaré. I told him that the matter was extremely serious, that he seemed to have forgotten his position, that not only was he chairman of the Conference but also Curzon's host, and that he had addressed Curzon in the most insulting tone and made statements about him which were absolutely untrue. I reminded him that Curzon was his equal, both of them being Foreign Ministers, to which he replied, "Yes, but I have held a higher position." I did not think it worth while to retort that it was the same with Curzon as ex-Viceroy of India.

He refused at first to apologize, saying that Curzon must come and tell him that he withdrew the sentence about abandonment. I stated that Curzon was too unwell at that moment but that he had charged me to convey this message to him. He refused to accept it from me, saying that Curzon must give it himself. I replied that I, as British Ambassador, was the recognized channel of communication between the French Minister for Foreign Affairs and the British Foreign Secretary, and that if he refused to accept a message from Curzon through me it would mean the end of the Conference since Curzon would go home at once and that I would take good care that the world should know upon whom the responsibility would lie for such a disaster. He then saw that he had made a mistake and changed his ground. He asked me then that the withdrawal should be made in public by me before the Conference. I replied that I would be quite ready to say so before the Italian Ambassador, but that I declined to do so before all the Secretaries and others in the Conference, who as far as I was concerned, did not count. He accepted and I then got hold of Count Sforza and in Poincaré's presence informed him that Curzon withdrew the sentence to which objection was taken. As Poincaré did not move I said to him before Sforza, "*C'est à vous, Monsieur le Président, de faire vos excuses.*" He did not dare, before Sforza, to raise any further objections, and went off and apologized to Curzon.

The Conference was then resumed, everything went off most peacefully and a satisfactory agreement made within an hour. The whole affair was most unfortunate and created a very unfavourable impression upon all those present at the Conference. Poincaré, under provocation, lost his self-control, although allowance must be made for Curzon that he was not well. It was interesting to me to see a telegram sent the same evening by Curzon to the Cabinet, from which it appeared that it was

Curzon who had browbeaten Poincaré and not the converse ! That myth was however soon exploded. Before Curzon left he told me over and over again that but for me the Conference must have broken down and that I saved it more than once. He was very generous to me personally, but I heard afterwards that he took the whole credit to himself, and *The Times* eulogized his "courage" !

The situation in Turkey did not improve and on October 7th there was another descent by Curzon on the Embassy, and though he arrived only at 9.40 p.m. we had a meeting at 11 o'clock which lasted till 2.15 a.m. At one time I thought there was going to be another row with Poincaré as he for a moment lost his temper, owing to Curzon smiling in a rather cynical way at something he had said, and Poincaré turned on him angrily and said, "Vous me riez au nez, je ne le permets pas." Happily peace was preserved, but Curzon in his long perorations was extremely tactless in the things he said and irritated Poincaré beyond measure. Finally things went better, and in two days Curzon and his party, to the great relief of the whole Embassy, returned to London.

No less than three times during the months of September and October I asked Curzon for permission to go to London for twenty-four hours to escort Diamond back to Paris. On each occasion he sent me a futile reply saying that some pressing despatch or telegram was being sent to me which, parenthetically, never arrived. Finally I went off to London without saying a word till the very moment of my departure, when he could not or dared not say anything.

In October the Lloyd George Government fell and Bonar Law formed the new Government. There was no change at the Foreign Office. I was asked my opinion as to who should be my successor and I suggested either Austen Chamberlain or Crewe. My advice was not taken and the post was offered to Milner, who refused it, and later on to Crewe, simply because nobody else suitable could be found. As I was to leave Paris by the end of the year I pressed for and obtained permission to announce my approaching departure and, of course, informed Poincaré in the first instance. He was very pleasant and complimentary as to the success of my efforts in Paris, and pressed me to remain on if possible for a further six months as there were such difficult questions to settle. I told him it was out of the question. The Government announced my resignation in very sympathetic terms and the Press responded with a universal expression of regret.

REPARATIONS

At this time two questions preoccupied the attention of the Foreign Office and the Quai d'Orsay, viz. the Near Eastern question and that of reparations. Negotiations on these two questions were endless, but the views of both Governments came eventually almost into close agreement. We were anxious to work in close unison with the French at the Conference at Lausanne, and to agree as to the amount and method of obtaining German reparations for which the French were anxious to secure definite pledges and material guarantees from the Germans. Curzon went off to the Conference at Lausanne in the latter half of November and for a time all went well, but in the end Curzon's ineptitude in dealing with foreigners, whom he could not understand, dragged on till February and ended in a complete fiasco. Curzon told me afterwards that he had hoped to return with "Peace with honour", but on his arrival in London he saw the placards everywhere with "Curzon's failure". As for reparations, a Conference took place in London in the beginning of December at which Poincaré and a French Delegation were present, but it was found impossible to arrive at an agreement, the occupation of the Ruhr demanded by France as a guarantee for German payments being the rock upon which the agreement split. It was adjourned till the beginning of January. This occurred only four days before I left Paris, but during those days Poincaré sent me several emissaries to impress upon me the fact that, in the absence of guarantees, the French would certainly go into the Ruhr. On the other hand, I told them that to do so would shake the foundations of the Entente, while the Belgian Ambassador told me that, rather than let the French go in alone, the Belgians would go in too, although they agreed with us that it was unnecessary and undesirable. I strongly urged him to find some other method of exerting pressure on Germany without going into the Ruhr, and offered the suggestion that the French should, as an alternative, exploit the mines and forests in Rhineland. After a long discussion he agreed to consider this proposal, provided that the line of Custom Houses was maintained on both banks of the Rhine and that the entry into the Ruhr should be regarded as justified in the event of the German Government attempting to starve the manufacturing districts of Rhineland by preventing coal from going west from the Ruhr. I told him that such a scheme would in my personal opinion be far more acceptable in England than the invasion of the Ruhr, since there would be no fresh invasion of Germany territory. People would understand the fact of France exploiting and developing Rhineland, which was under

Allied occupation, in view of the fact that Germany had failed entirely to produce the money required for reparations. I told him that I would certainly place this proposal before Bonar Law and would endeavour to persuade him in that sense. Poincaré remarked that he could not promise that this scheme would be acceptable to the Council of Ministers who had to be consulted, but that he had reason to hope that it would be so. I left him very pleased with what I thought was my last diplomatic effort and that I was the bearer of an olive branch that no British Government could fail to accept. I was mistaken, as will be shown later.

On the day before I left Paris I was invited to lunch with the President, and at a private interview before luncheon he presented me with the insignia of the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour. He was very cordial and told me how much he regretted my departure and how much he appreciated my efforts, frequently under difficult circumstances, to maintain the best relations between the two Governments which had been crowned with success. I remarked that it was a source of great pleasure to me to receive this high distinction as it was just twenty years earlier that I had received from President Loubet the second class of the Order on the occasion of King Edward's first visit to Paris after his accession. He was unaware of this and expressed his pleasure at knowing it. I would like to say here that I always found Millerand extremely sensible and friendly towards England and he was a man who could see the other person's point of view, which Poincaré could not. I have preserved a very pleasant recollection of my relations with Millerand.

On December 16th I left Paris for England and my appointment as Ambassador terminated on January 1st, 1923. After my arrival in London I asked to see Bonar Law and had an interview with him when I put before him the proposal I had made to Poincaré and which the latter had practically accepted, by which the entry of the French into the Ruhr might be avoided. To my great surprise Bonar Law turned it down, saying that English public opinion would never tolerate the exploitation of Rhineland by the French. I pointed out to him at considerable length that the alternative was the entry of the French into the Ruhr and its exploitation by them, which would be a new invasion of Germany with all the risks and dangers it would entail. He would not believe that the French would take such a hazardous step in spite of my assurances that it was otherwise inevitable. He finally said, "It is a wash-out, and you must write to Poincaré and tell him so." I did this on the following day.

OCCUPATION OF THE RUHR

In view of the importance of the circumstances leading up to the occupation of the Ruhr by French and Belgian troops in January 1923, and the absence of any official statement of my conversation with M. Poincaré on December 15, 1922, I came to the conclusion in April 1924 that it was very desirable to have a definite record of what took place on that occasion. I wrote therefore to M. Hermitte, M. Poincaré's Private Secretary, and asked him to give me a copy of my private letter to the French Prime Minister which I had written to him after Mr. Bonar Law had turned down his proposal.

M. Hermitte's reply of April 24, 1924, and a copy of my letter to M. Poincaré of December 22, 1922, recording his proposal and its rejection by Mr. Bonar Law are included in a volume of miscellaneous Paris papers of 1920-1923.

The Conference met again on the 2nd January in Paris and ended in disagreement, the result being that within a week the French and Belgians had entered and taken possession of the Ruhr valley. The only explanation I can offer of this deplorable decision on the part of Bonar Law is that he was already a sick man and incapable of grasping its importance. He died a few months later.

So ended my diplomatic career, stretching over nearly forty-three years. I left Paris with many regrets, especially on account of my numerous French friends, who always showed me under every conceivable circumstance invariable kindness and sympathy. In spite of many worries and anxieties I spent two very happy years there as Ambassador, which I look back upon with pleasure. Although many of my friends never could understand my resignation of the highest post in the Diplomatic Service, I always congratulate myself on the wisdom of my decision, which I have never for one instant regretted. I received a very warm letter of thanks from the Government, which I hope I may be pardoned if I quote *in extenso* :

FOREIGN OFFICE.

December 27th, 1922.

MY LORD,

Within a few days from now Your Lordship will have terminated your long and honourable career in the service of the Crown, and I cannot let this occasion pass without expressing to you the unfeigned regret with which His Majesty's Government have accepted your resignation of the post of His Majesty's Ambassador in Paris.

It is well nigh forty-three years since you entered the Diplomatic

Service and during that time Your Lordship has filled with the utmost distinction many of the greatest posts open to a British subject. I may, with special gratification, recall the services which you rendered to this country while Ambassador at Petrograd on the occasion of the Dogger Bank incident, the high level of efficiency to which you brought the Foreign Office while Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the notable compliment paid to the service as a whole when Your Lordship was selected to accompany King Edward as Minister in attendance on His Majesty's many state visits to foreign capitals. For five and a half years you held the great appointment of Governor-General of India. The end of the war found Your Lordship once more installed at the Foreign Office as Permanent Under-Secretary of State, and finally you realized the ambition of every member of His Majesty's Diplomatic Service by becoming His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris. Two Sovereigns in succession have marked their appreciation of Your Lordship's eminent services by conferring upon you a peerage, the Order of the Garter and a series of Grand Crosses; and it is doubtful whether any Englishman not of Royal birth has ever held more foreign orders than yourself.

It is my pleasant duty to convey to you the sincere and cordial thanks of His Majesty's Government for the great services you have rendered to your country and I should like to add an expression of hope that Your Lordship will be spared for many years to enjoy your well earned rest.

I am, etc. . . .

(Signed) CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

His Excellency

The Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, K.G., G.C.B.

E P I L O G U E

Happy the man, and happy he alone,
He, who can call to-day his own ;
He, who secure within, can say,
To-morrow do thy worst for I have lived to-day,
Be fair, or foul, or rain, or shine,
The joys I have possessed, in spite of fate, are mine,
Not Heaven itself upon the past has power,
But what has been, has been, and I have had my hour.

. DRYDEN.

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